FRONT: MAY WEEK - 5 / HUSIC: A NORTHERN CHORUS - 47 / ARTS: MY ONE AND ONLY-64

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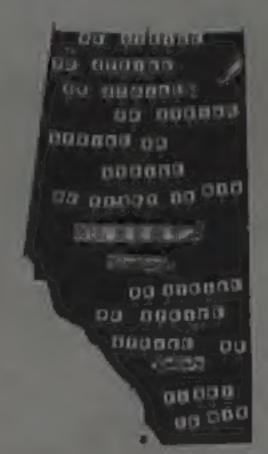
NTS ON THE GOVE

It's the Great Outdoors issue—our annual celebration of the beauty of nature and all the invigorating activities you can pursue within it—and Vue's army of writers has spent so much time indoors putting it all together that we probably need an outdoor holiday more than any of you reading it. Did that sound snippy?

Sorry—the lack of fresh air is making us cranky • 27

FRONT

Remembering the days when Alberta was proud of its strong labour movement • 5



MIISIM

A Northern Chorus ventures faraway from their southern Ontario home • 47



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Hello, Norma Jean:
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Disjunction functions

The Take beat local filmmaker's Argentina doc to theatres, but he says his film tells a fuller story

BY CAROLYN NIKODYM

Italian filmmaker Carlo Ghioni bring the footage he shot in Argentina up to Edmonton to be edited into a documentary that they would eventually title Disjunction, neither of them knew that, at that same moment, esteemed journalists-cum-filmmakers Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein were also working on a documentary in Argentina called The Take, which would beat MacKenzie's doc to

the theatres by a full seven months.

"When we first found out about it, I wouldn't say we were happy," says 24-year-old MacKenzie. And with good cause: not only did the two films turn out to be very similarly themed in that they were both concerned with Argentina's rebuilding period following the country's economic collapse in December 2001, but both movies even used some of



the same archive footage. But despite this development, MacKenzie refused to get discouraged; as he explains, while the two documentaries do indeed follow a similar tale, the way each tells it is still very different. "Carlo really has the characters tell their own story," says the 24-year-old Edmontonian. "Ours is very much more street-level."

And whereas Lewis and Klein's presence as active participants and narrators in *The Take* was front and centre, MacKenzie continues, *Disjunction* is told solely through the voices of Argentineans. "In *The Take*, they're very much leading the audience," he says. "But I just don't like being told what to think. An average audience who isn't necessarily very political will immediately turn off when they're being told what to think."

The idea for the film first came about when MacKenzie and Ghioni met while attending the same film school in Vancouver; MacKenzie learned Ghioni had visited Argentina in mid-2002 to document the strug-

SEE PAGE 7





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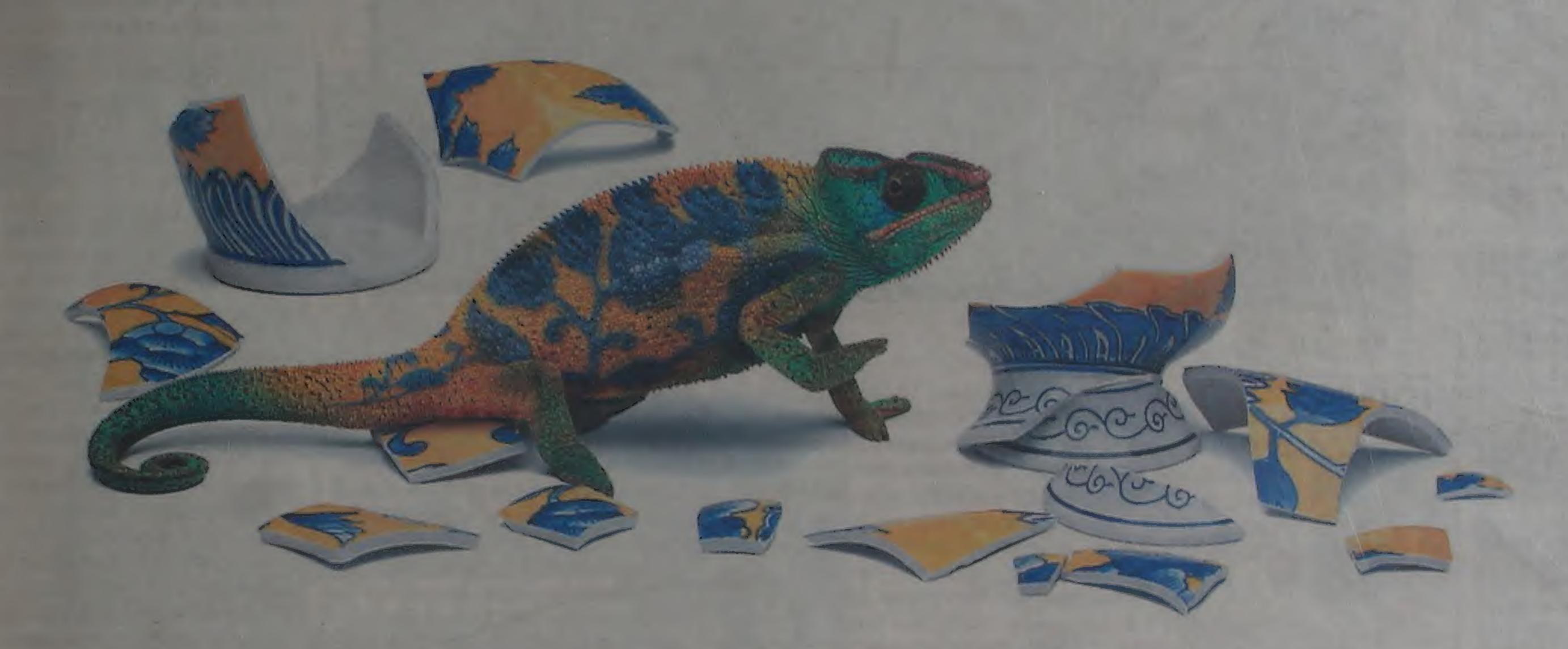
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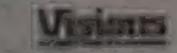
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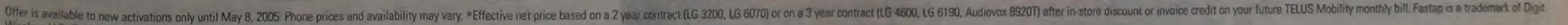
















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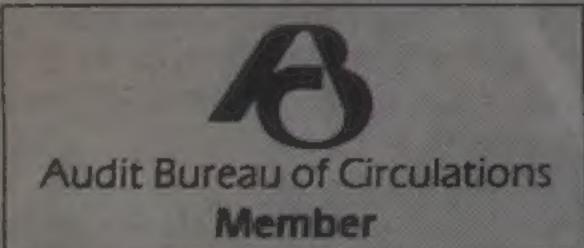
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BY CHRIS BOUTET

BABIES: CRAZY FOR COKE!

This may come as a surprise to a lot of people, but, uh, Nunavut? Kinda boring, apparently. So boring, in fact, that people will try anything to break the monotony of their wintry lives—including, it seems, drinking buckets and buckets of pop.

Indeed, according to the CBC, popdrinking has reached catastrophic levels in Canada's north, to the point where health officials in Nunavut have been forced to spring into action this week by launching a territory-wide "Drop the Pop" campaign in an effort to raise awareness about tooth decay, obesity and diabetes amongst Nunavut's population of 27,000.

And just how much pop are Nunavites (Nunavitians?) drinking, you ask? According to Ainiak Korgak, manager of health promotion with the territorial health department, massive fuckloads—although he didn't use that phrase at all. But he implied it, kind of, as he explained to the CBC that today's Inuit are increasingly choosing soft drinks and other assorted processed foods over traditional diets and other imported drinks like milk and juice. "A community will run out of pop and they'll charter a plane to bring more pop," said Korgak, "so that tells you how much people love their pop."

With people so horny for pop, the industry surely loves them right back—in fact, according to the same story, a Coca-Cola manufacturing plant that

opened in Iqaluit 10 years ago produces upwards of 4,000 two-litre bottles and 20,000 smaller bottles a day, just to meet demand in Nunavut. And it's not just the adults and teens; according to Amy Caughey, a nutritionist for the territorial government, babies can't seem to get enough pop either—by this fall, more than 750 infants in the territory will have some or all of their teeth pulled out, thanks to their parents. "If babies have pop in a bottle, or younger children are getting a lot of pop, they're not getting the things that they need to grow and it can be quite harmful," she said.

Oh, come on, now--surely the nine to 12 teaspoons of sugar present in an average can of pop can be part of a healthy, balanced diet for babies.

WAR CRIMES: ADMIRABLE!

Well, it just wouldn't be an election without at least one politician saying something really stupid and being forced to resign—but this time, for once, it wasn't some hillbilly ex-Reformer from Alberta doing the badthing-saying; rather, it was a member of the good ol' harmless NDP who, during the course of his campaign for a spot in the B.C. legislature, felt it necessary to say that he felt Slobodan Milosevic was kind of a nice guy.

According to reports by the Canadian Press, Rollie Keith, the NDP candidate for the Chilliwack-Kent riding, announced his resignation from the race on Monday over some "favourable" comments he made regarding the accused war criminal that were brought to light by a columnist for the Vancouver Province. Currently, Milosevic is facing 66 charges before a war crimes tribunal in The Hague regarding his actions during the Kosovo war. According to the column published last Friday, Keith, who had volunteered in 1999 as an international observer monitoring the peace agreement in Kosovo, testified last year in Milosevic's defense, stating that he believed the case for genocide against the leader had been exaggerated. Keith added that he had met twice with Milosevic in his cell at The Hague, and he was quite impressed. "I saw him as someone caught up in a bad time in history," Keith said at the time. "He meant well. He was trying to do his best for his country."

On Monday, Keith attempted to qualify his remarks for reporters. "I don't know what orders he did or did not give," Keith told the CP, "but I discussed it with him and he convinced me to some extent that whatever he did was for the good of his country and I came away with the sense that this man was not a diabolical war criminal."

After all, "war criminal" is such a loaded term, isn't it?

SCIENCE: USEFUL!

With the American border still locked down to Canadian beef thanks to fearmongering by the Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund and the Montana judge who bought it, representatives of the U.S.'s largest farm organization stepped forward at the beginning of the week to suggest that perhaps science, of all things, should decide whether or not BSE in Canadian cattle is actually a concern.

According to the CBC, the American Farm Bureau released a brief proclaiming its support for an appeal to the lockdown, stating that R-CALF's opposition is based largely on the favourable economic climate that the lockdown has created, noting that Canadian is still easily considered a "minimal-risk" region by the U.S. government. "We probably spent more time on the Canadian border-BSE issue than any other issue at this year's annual meeting," Mary Kay Thatcher, director of policy with the bureau, told the CBC. "Our voting delegates said overwhelmingly... we must make sure the decision on opening the border is based on sound science."

They still have that in the States, right? Science? •



vuepoint

BY MARNOLD SINCLAIR

Tube mistakes

There's a chance that you may not have heard of this, but this week, from April 25 to May 1, is TV Turnoff Week—which, as the title suggests, is a week during which TVs should be turned off. For, you see, TVs are bad for myriad reasons, and TV Turnoff Week, as a recent article in Adbusters explained, is not only a statement against "dead-end couch culture," but also about cleaning up the "mental environment." Apparently, thanks to TV our "shared mindscape" has become "littered with pollutants," including but not limited to distorted news, manipulative ads, violence and something called "top-down culture," a term I'm sure would make sense to me if I hadn't spent my life until now so slavishly hypnotized by modern society's greatest evil, the television.

But now that I've had someone tell me the truth, what do I do? Well, according to the same article, in the past anti-TV activists have demonstrated how anti-TV everyone else should be by smashing TVs, postering schools and offices, taking out print ads and the like. This year, however, TV non-enthusiasts can equip themselves with a far more modern means for combating television: the "TV-B-Gone," a little universal remote that fits on a keychain and can be used to turn off TVs in public places, thereby waking the zombied masses from their daily, TV-enduced shuffle of the damned and ushering in a new world of intellectualism and harmony. For the TV-B-Gone, anti-TV activists, I thank you—and I'm sure the rest of North America thanks you too, because as we all know, there's nothing that people appreciate more than having someone else's personal beliefs actively forced upon them in the most condescending and intrusive way possible.

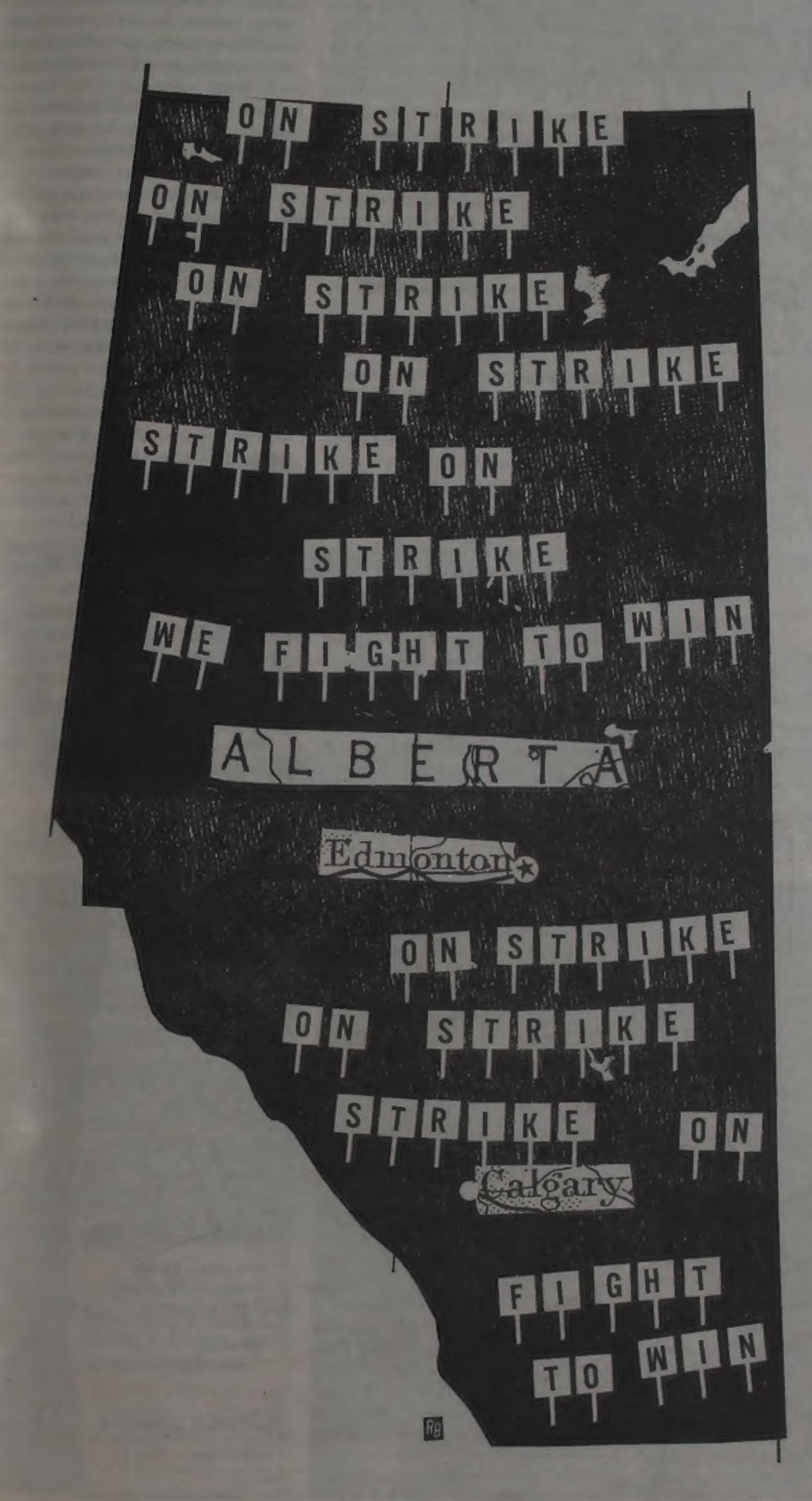
Maybe I'm just coming from a more laissez-faire, respect-the-opinions-of-others school of thought, but surely even the most haughtily self-important demagogue armed with their little zapper can agree that annoyingly forcing one's opinions on others is rarely a good means of increasing sympathy for one's cause.

I'm sure that some would contend that such a campaign is indeed effective, if for no other reason than it has made the public aware that there is some debate happening about the merits of TV. But surely, there are less intrusive ways to get this point across—like, say, making your own choices and hoping others follow your example. But I imagine that this would be far too dignified and respectful of others—and let's face it these are two notions that don't seem to get a lot of play in activist circles these days. •

Eleven days in M

May Week festival honours the proud history of Alberta's labour movement in a way that the centennial celebration won't

BY EMMA SASSE



ecember 19, 1932. Ten thousand Albertans gather in downtown Edmonton for a march to the Legislature, a march to demand better working conditions and better pay—and for the bosses and politicians to do something about the poverty and desperation engulfing a province in the throes of the Great Depression. Young communists. Labour party members. Families. Farmers. Factory workers. After making speeches declaring their intentions and tactics to be peaceful, the marchers turned west onto Jasper Avenue; there, the Hunger March was met by police. Storming the crowd on horseback, police cut a swath with their billy clubs, the bones and skulls of ordinary people breaking the trajectory of police truncheons. The official records say 29 were arrested. Countless others were injured.

1986. 66th Street and Yellowhead Trail—the Gainers Meat Packing Plant, owned by Peter Pocklington. Fifty-some years later, the police have traded their horses in for the rat-a-tat of truncheons against riot shields, keeping a rhythm of boots to pavement, clubs to shields, that is meant to sound militaristic and intimidating. It's the kind of setup for a battle scene most people would rather encounter only at the movies. But here again were ordinary working-class folks, people who did some of the most backbreaking, difficult work in the city, on a

picket line on strike against an attempt to bust their union. Real life, not Hollywood, saw members of UFCW Local 280P stare

down the SWAT teams and the scabs on Pocklington's payroll. And in real life, they won that struggle to keep the plant unionized and improve their working conditions.

Those two snapshots of homegrown struggles and sacrifice give us a little window into our history-2005 is Alberta's centennial, but the usual chest-thumping and empty patriotism won't dare whisper so many of our stories as a province. The provincial government's centennial website boasts about the Queen's upcoming visit and some expensive and silly centennial medallion project; there's also a button in the history section that leads the visitor to a highly selective account of Alberta's "Romance with Oil and Gas." But here's a sampling of what you won't hear: like the province itself, Alberta's labour unions were formed in the early part of the last century—the plumbers and coal miners were first, along with textile workers and meat packers.

THE EARLY 1900S were a time of rich union organizing in our province, and Edmonton and Calgary were both hubs of labour activity—so much so, in fact, that a 1909 edition of the Morning Albertan described Calgary as "a labour union city.... The unions are strong and responsible, and in all cases the unions have been exceedingly reasonable.... The labouring man who is not a labour unionist is both unwise and ungrateful." The Edmonton Journal used to provide space for weekly reports from the Labour Council, where Reverend F.W. Mercer, a socialist, would pen requests for laws against corporate profiteering and in favour of better working conditions and the eight-hour day.

The very first unionized factory seamstresses were the women of the GWG factory in Edmonton, who were also the first union in Alberta to win the

eight-hour day. Edmonton's city council was dominated by labour councilors for the first 30 years of the last century, and Edmonton's first woman councilor, Margaret Crang, was a self-described socialist who went to Spain to fight the fascists after her two terms on council in 1936. And of course, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation—Canada's first national leftist political party formed by farmers and labour activists and the predecessor of the NDP—was founded in Calgary on August 1, 1932. As union activist Eugene Plawiuk puts it, for a place known now for its rednecks, Alberta's roots are more just plain red.

What a difference a century makes. Life was never easy for trade unionists in Alberta, but the discovery of oil changed Alberta's political landscape forever, as American-based oil companies found strong anti-union allies in Alberta's Social Credit premiers William Aberhart and, later, Ernest C. Manning, who viewed trade unions as part of a grand communist conspiracy. Edmontonian Neil Reimer, now 84, was one of the founding members of the Canadian Oil Workers Union, and tried to organize the oil workers at Leduc #1 after the big discovery of oil there.

"We thought we would sign them up, so that wherever the industry went after that it would be unionized," Reimer says. "So we signed up the workers, and the

government ordered a vote. Then the company shipped a lot of the workers—our support-

ers—to Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, and they brought in a lot of new people after the application was made. Those new people were, of course, selected on the basis that they were antiunion. And so we failed at that one.

"But we did, in the end, organize the refineries and chemical plants, because you can't move [the workers] around as easy," Reimer continues. "We broke the ice in around 1954, when we organized the Celanese plant just outside Edmonton, the Gulf refinery in Lloydminster and the Husky and Wainwright refineries. But in every plant we've had, the workers have had to have a lot of grit and guts to form a union. The benefits are clear, though. In Alberta, we have one of the lowest percentages of unionized workers, at about 21 per cent. Senior citizens with employer pensions in Alberta are also about 21 per cent. If you don't have a union, you will pay for it later on," concludes the longtime activist, who now devotes his time to the Alberta Council on Aging.

intones Dave Werlin, who was president of the Alberta Federation of Labour during the Gainers strike, and is now a member of the Alberta Labour History

"THINGS ARE GETTING WORSE,"

Institute. "It's a real concern for democracy when you have, nowadays, pretty well every level of government that is able to do away with jobs, bring in privatization and diminish workers' rights

with impunity.

"It's on a bigger scale now with globalization," Werlin continues. "With Gainers, we won but then they closed the plant. The GWG factory moved to Haiti last year. The Celanese plant is closing—the jobs are going to China. Foreign workers are being imported in to work in the oil sands because big oil doesn't want to pay union wages."

SEE PAGE 8





FOUNDATONS OF BUDDHISM



BY CHRIS BOUTET

Royale with cheese

Like most people, it's not often that I feel something approximating sympathy for the Queen. After all, you have to admit she's got a pretty sweet job over there in merry olde London-town, seeing as she doesn't seem to do anything at all, ever, beyond the occasional somethingunveiling and a little wavey-wavey now and then. Well, maybe she does some other things; sitting around Buckingham Palace, staring at the gold-plated walls, absent-mindedly polishing whatever priceless relic is closest at the time, generally rattling around and waiting for death— those are all technically things you do, I guess. But my point is that it's not like she does anything hard, like, oh, I don't know... working in a foundry. Or, like, learning karate.

Still, she does get out of the house now and then, and when your life's as empty and dull as the Queen's, I'm sure even that fleeting moment of waveywavey becomes something to look forward to. And if the Queen indeed thinks crowd-waving is as much of a wild party as you can have short of killing Kim Mitchell and wearing his skin, then man, she must be totally stoked about her upcoming trip to Alberta for our centennial this May. Too bad we Albertans seem so completely intent on boring her to death during her stay.

In case you missed it, the party plans for the Queen and Prince Philip's visit were released last Friday to limited fanfare---and for good reason, since, according to the CBC, the so-called "highlights" of her two-and-a-half-day visit at the end of May will include a welcoming dinner at Commonwealth Stadium, dinner at the Westin, a plaque-unveiling at the Provincial

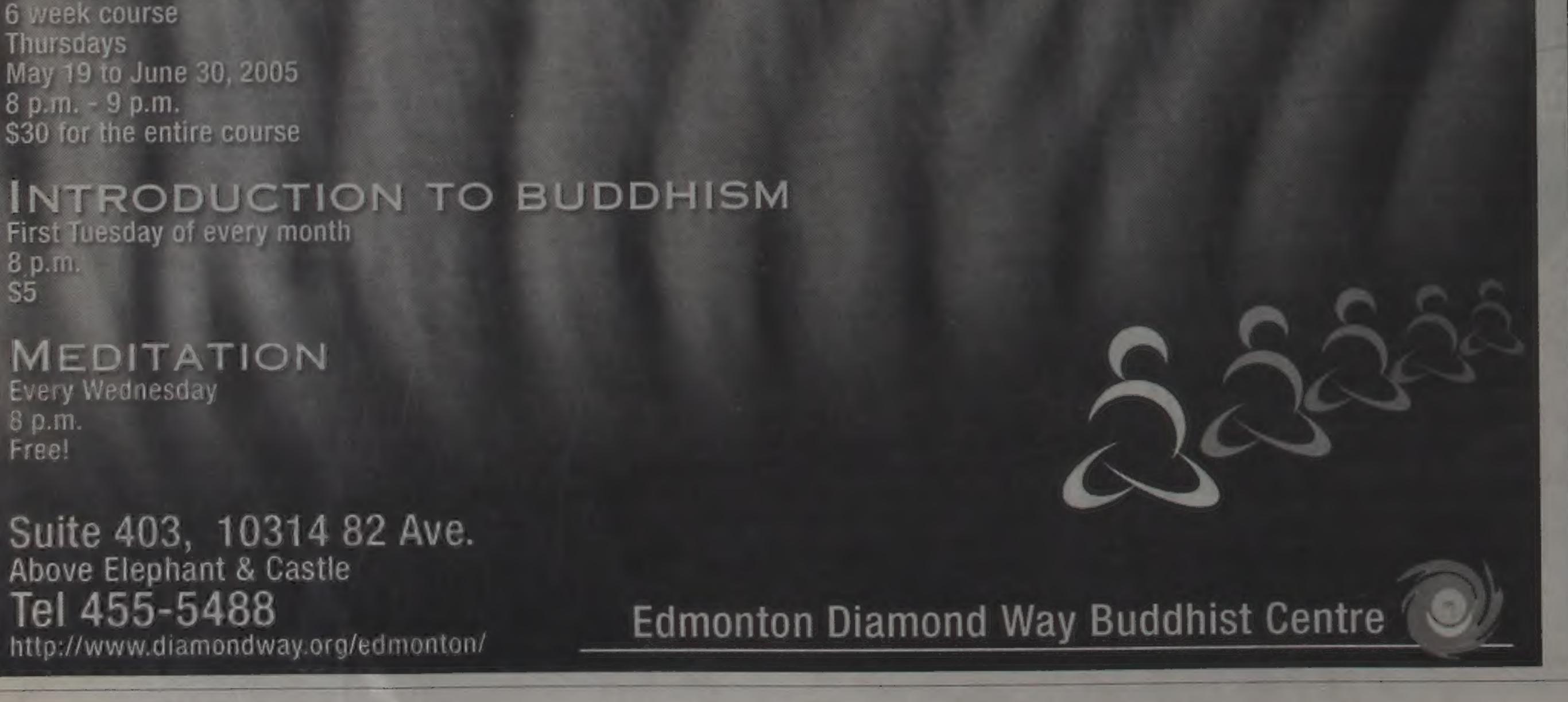
Museum, a tour of the Leg, and-the coup de grâce of awesome-an aerial tour of the oilsands.

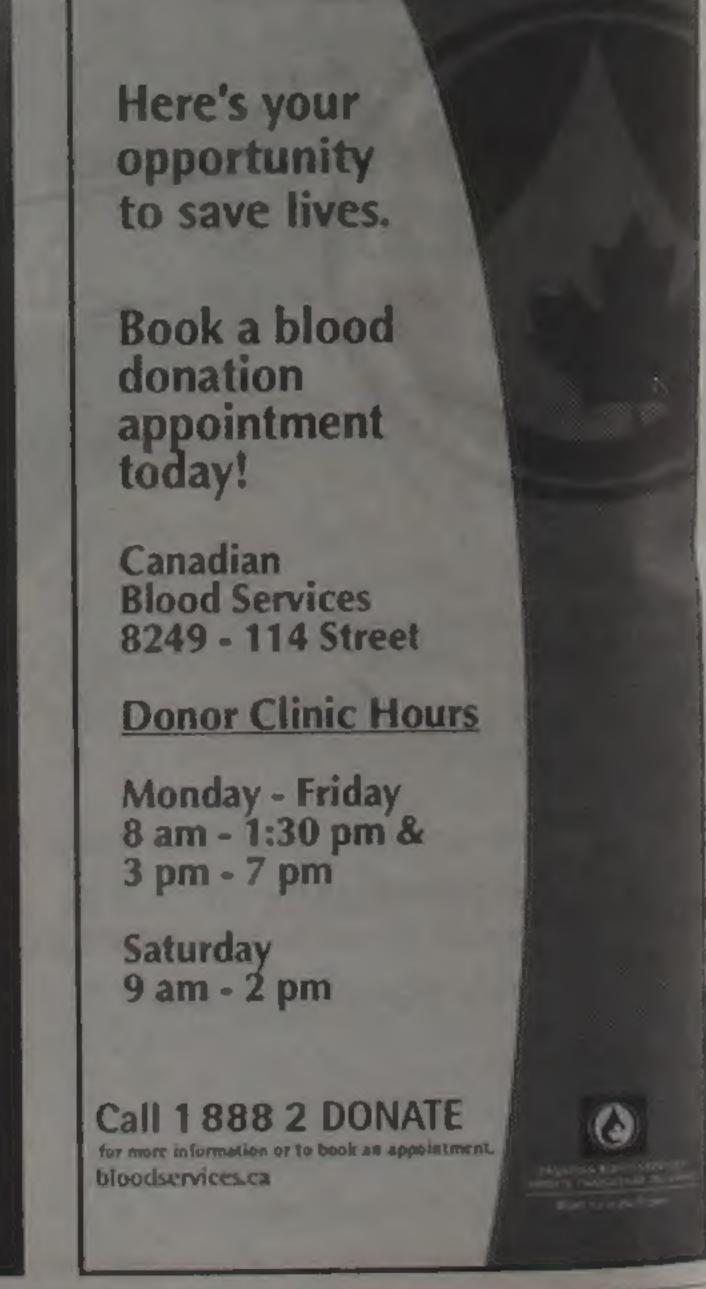
Wow! A tour of the Leg?! Quick everybody, climb aboard the good ship Edmonton—and be sure to get some sleep tonight, for tomorrow, we set sail for rad-venture! Seriously: this is the Queen, folks, not some Grade Four class taking a field trip to learn how a bill becomes a law. Hey, maybe if she's lucky, she'll get to wear one of those cool robes and pretend to be the Lieutenant-Governor for a day.

Yee. Otherwise, I guess I can understand the Provincial Museum thing and dinner at the Westin (although I kind of have to wonder why the stately Hotel Macdonald wasn't apparently an option: maybe a wedding party already had the lounge booked that day or something). Sure, they're boring, but really, what else are you going to do? Seeing as she's more or less mandated to visit Edmonton, our lack of fascinating, non-giantmall tourist attractions makes the museum and the Legislature obvious, if not snoozy, sightseeing choices.

But really: a helicopter ride over the oilsands? Instead of, say, the Rockies? I'm sorry, but how could we possibly expect the Queen to give two dignified, queenly poops about the place where our oil comes from? Just imagine the wonder and delight in her eyes as she's instructed to look out the window to her left and take in the spectacle of a man driving a very large dumptruck! Why, I bet she won't be able to shut up about it for weeks once she gets back and starts scooting all over the palace on her hands and knees with her newly-purchased souvenir backhoe. "I say, look at me, Carruthers!" she'll squeal at a passing butler. "I'm an oilpatch foreman, and as such, I get to navigate this large piece of machinery all over the ravaged earth of northern Alberta! Honk! Out of my way, Carruthers! Honk! HONK HONK HONK!!" Then she'll get all tuckered out and have a nap right there on the floor, because hey. Being a foreman sure can be hard work.

What were we talking about again? Oh yeah. Alberta party: boring. Ah well, I quess, if nothing else, it can't be any worse than whatever slough tour Saskatchewan's going to take her on. 0

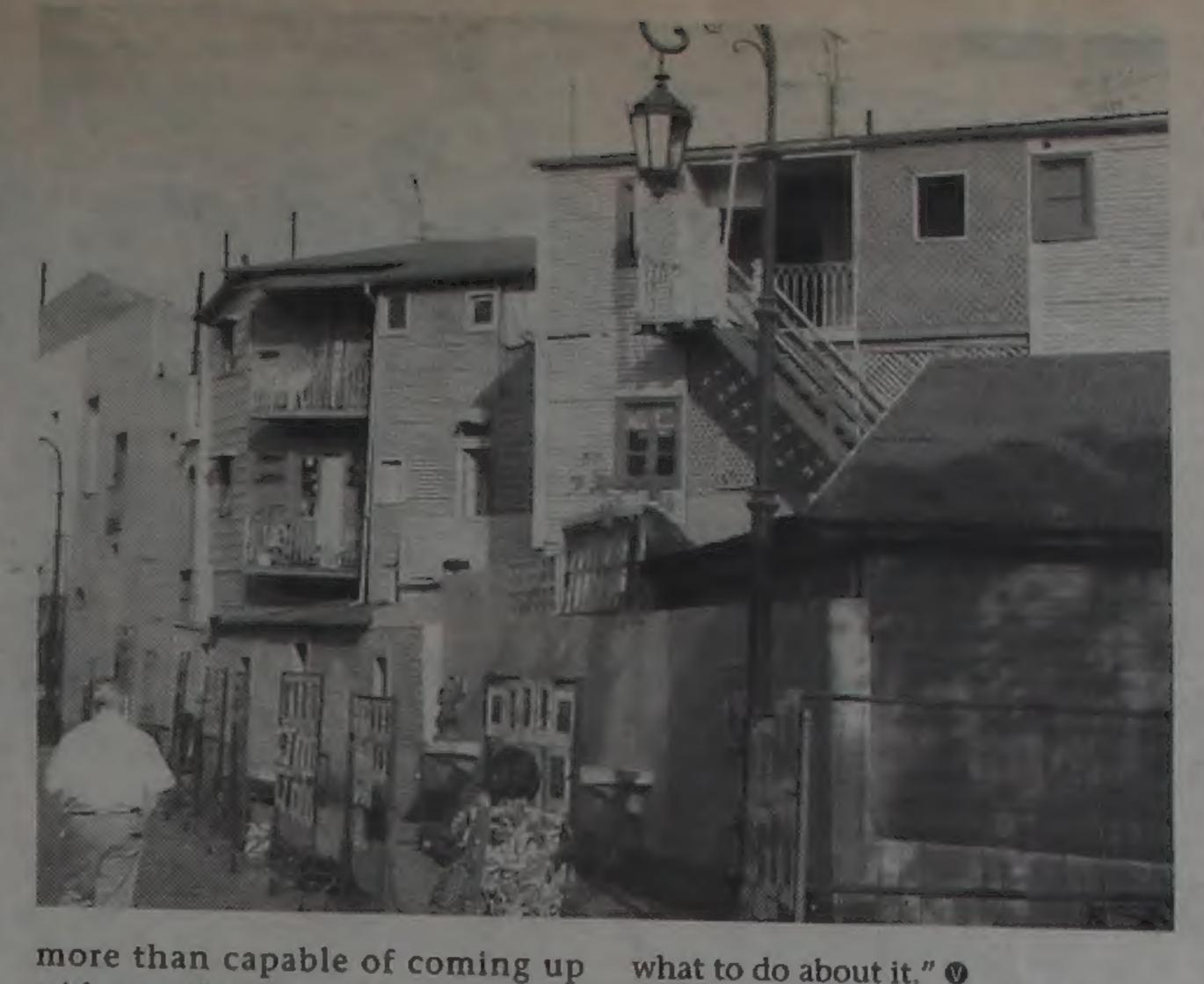




gles of the working class in the financially decimated South American country and the new economy that emerged in its wake. As Disjunction shows in tragic detail, the damage was profound: banks closed overnight, people lost all of their savings, unemployment soared and what was once the richest country in Latin America turned into a ghost town of factories. Families were forced to collect paper, cardboard and other garbage just to earn enough to eat, factory workers struggled to take over factories so that they might work and markets were set up that relied on the barter system. Today, over half of Argentina's population lives below the poverty line.

ALTHOUGH THE FOOTAGE was shot more than two years ago, Argentina's struggle continues, and MacKenzie believes the story is still relevant to the here and now. "The carpet's been pulled out from under them in a very dramatic way," he says. "Imagine that sort of thing happening here—if everyone lost their money and most of us lost our jobs tomorrow. The fact that there was not complete upheaval is amazing."

While Ghioni is already a wellestablished filmmaker in Italy, this is MacKenzie's first foray into the movie business. "This is my first project," he says, "and it was important to me to do it on my own dollar and



with something, a good product with not a heck of a lot of money." Dis-

Disjunction screens tonight (Thursday) at the Citadel's Zeidler Hall at 7pm.

what to do about it." O

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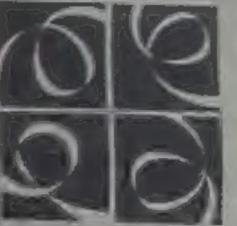
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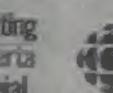
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prove to myself and others that I'm

junction was made for less than \$20,000, and MacKenzie found himself having to juggle finances in order to keep the project moving. Although he still owes money on it, he and Ghioni have already been working on other ideas, including a piece exploring the racial tension in Torino, Italy, Ghioni's home town

and the host city to the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. "There really is this cultural strata, this division, this invisible wall in Torino," says MacKenzie. "If it's left to fester, it's going to blow up. And you're going to have the wrong people deciding

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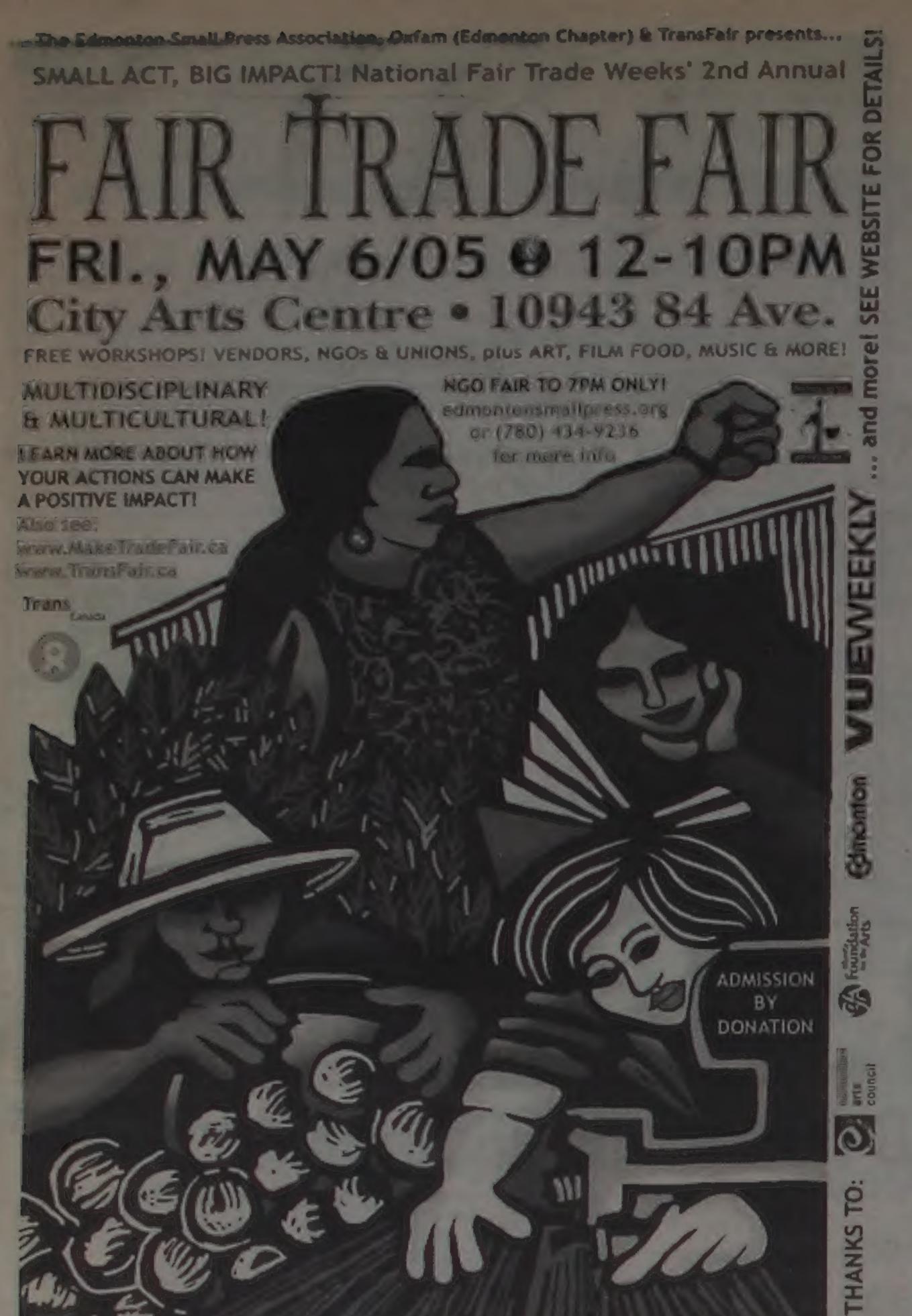
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May Week

Continued from page 5

Werlin adds that the media does organized labour no favours. "When is the last time you heard about something good that trade unions do for workers?" he asks. "Never. All you hear about are strikes, wherever they happen, and how unions behave irresponsibly." Indeed, the 1909 Morning Albertan quote about Calgary could easily replace "labour" with "corporations" and one would get a better sense of the current editorial bent of Alberta's urban dailies. The notion that updates from the Alberta Federation of Labour or its affiliates on union activity would constitute "news" in the Edmonton Journal-as it did when the paper carried Labour Council updates in the early part of the century—nowadays borders on ludicrous. This, despite the fact that the good news far outweighs the bad for unionized workers—as Gil McGowan, communications director for the AFL is fond of pointing out, 99 per cent of contract negotiations between Alberta unions and employers end in settlement, a tidbit lost on most media observers.

For the past four years of her life, musician Maria Dunn researched Alberta's labour and pioneering history and rolled what she found into an album's worth of songs. 2004's We Were Good People documents the 1932 Hunger March, coal miners' struggles and the lives of black pioneers—history that Dunn, who grew up in Alberta,

came to as an adult because, she says, "You just don't learn this stuff in school." Understanding our history, Dunn explains, is key to understanding that there have been good people working for social change in this province all along: "We always hear that if we're not okay with the government, or the way things are, then we're not proud to be Albertans. When you understand that people have been organizing and struggling here since the beginning, you reclaim the idea that to love the province is to try and make it better."

DUNN'S SONGS will be showcased at this year's May Week festival of labour and the arts, at a multimedia presentation of her music and accompanying photographs Friday, April 29. May Week is an annual festival of labour and the arts, timed to coincide with May 1—an internationally recognized Labour Day everywhere except North America. Edmonton's May Week festival was resurrected in 1992 by the Edmonton and District Labour Council, and the week's worth of entertainment include celebrations of workers, art and music both past and present.

The arts, says this year's May Week co-ordinator Joanne Janzen, have always been integral to labour organizing, as union meetings are often punctuated "by someone bringing a song or a poem that talked about the struggles they were facing." The May Week festival is also making space for the visual arts, with a worker's art show in, ironical-

ly, the Commerce Place Works Gallery. Janzen says May Week is about political education, but also about pure entertainment—the strictly human need to connect through art and expression, and creating community through music, poetry, dance and visual arts.

Dunn is also motivated by the need to create an emotional connection to labour struggles in a province that is so quick to dismiss, ignore or express outright hostility toward unions and left-activists. "I had never heard of the 1932 Hunger March before I started this project," she says. "To me, it just relates so strongly to what's going on in the world today, in terms of the big socalled 'anti-globalization' protests against the G8 and the FTAA. We see this happening all around us, but it is not something new; it was happening in 1932, in our own city.

"Maybe if people can come to understand the emotional impact it made on the people of Edmonton who were there that day in 1932, they can come to understand what motivates activists now," she continues. "It just seems easier for people to understand why unions and activists were protesting way back then—if we can achieve that, then maybe they can see our point of view now."

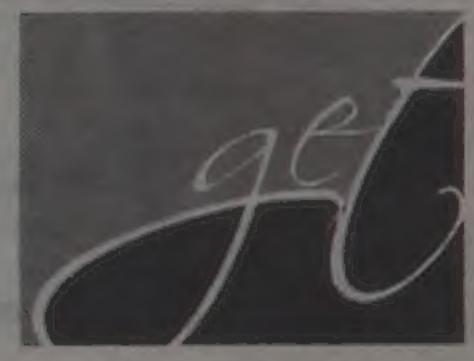
LINDA GOYETTE, a former Edmonton Journal and Calgary Herald columnist, devoted much of her most recent book Edmonton in Our Own Words to labour history and the individuals who led union struggles in our city. "A great example of women's organizing in Edmonton is the waitresses' strike in 1923," says Goyette. "Women worked nine- to 10-hour days, six days a week, and had to pay \$5 a day for a place to stay—a cot in the basement. The owners wanted to cut wages by 27 per cent. The waitresses in four cafés went on strike for 29 days. They ended up going back to work for a 12 per cent wage cutbut imagine how difficult it was for those women to strike for 29 days.

"It's interesting given the fact that so many people-predominantly women-work in restaurants today for minimum wage, without any kind of collective bargaining," Goyette continues. A 12 per cent wage cut back in the day sounds like a pretty raw deal in today's terms, but consider this: most servers in Alberta make minimum wage, which hasn't been raised in five years. Compound inflation's been at least 12 per cent over the past decade, and servers in 2005 have lost at least what the waitresses of 1923 were forced to take after a long strike.

"Some people are interested in the history, and some people are not," Goyette says. "That's okay, but it is a good idea for everyone to know, even in a general way, that our hours, conditions and wages in our workplaces are not an accident. People had to fight for them, and that fight goes on today. There is no shortage of examples of Albertans that have had to work very hard to have the same rights as people in other provinces." 0

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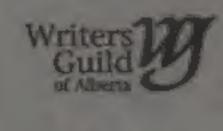
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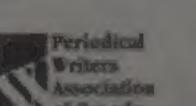
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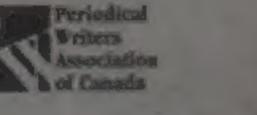
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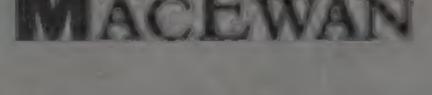






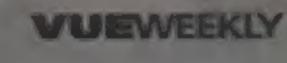






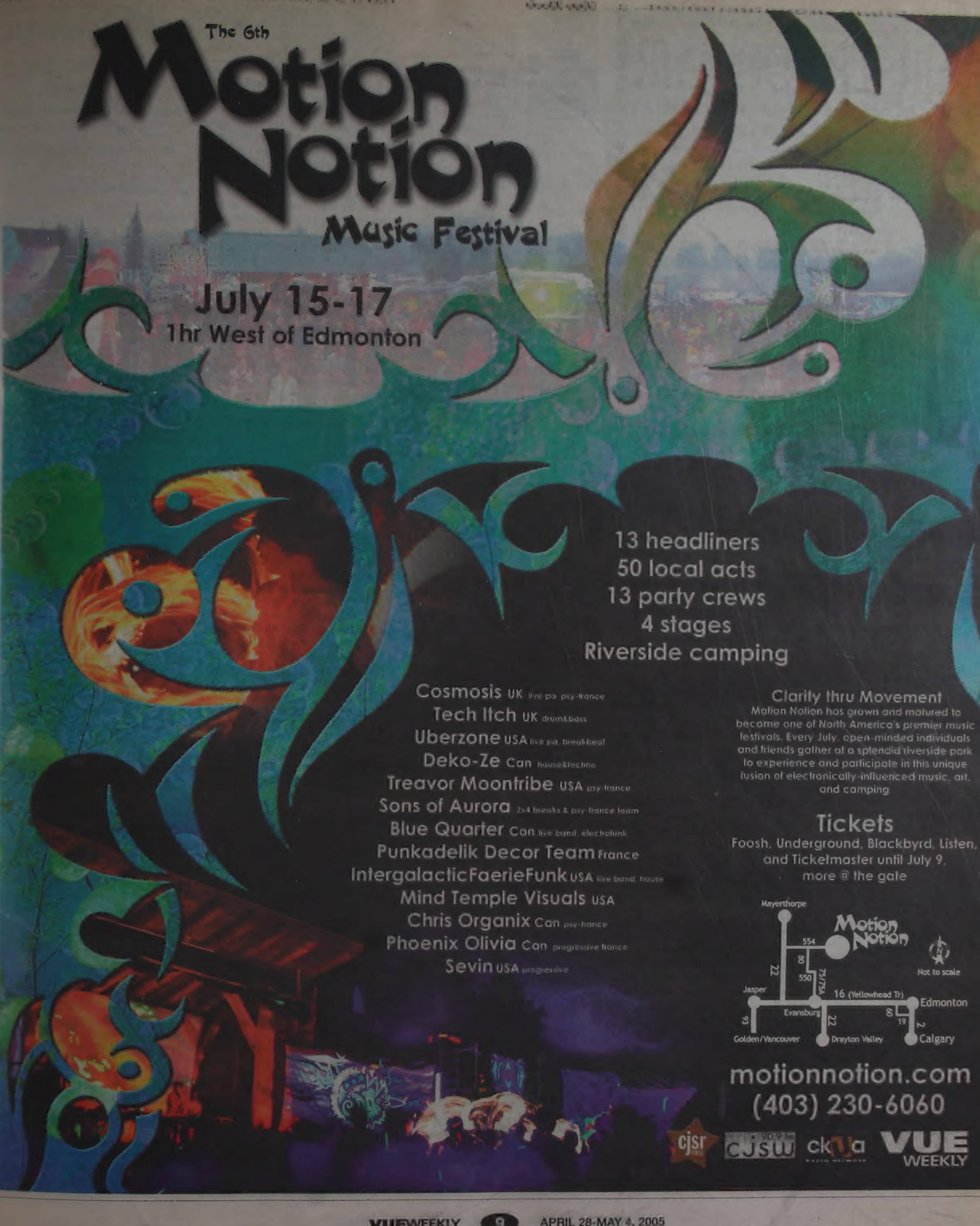
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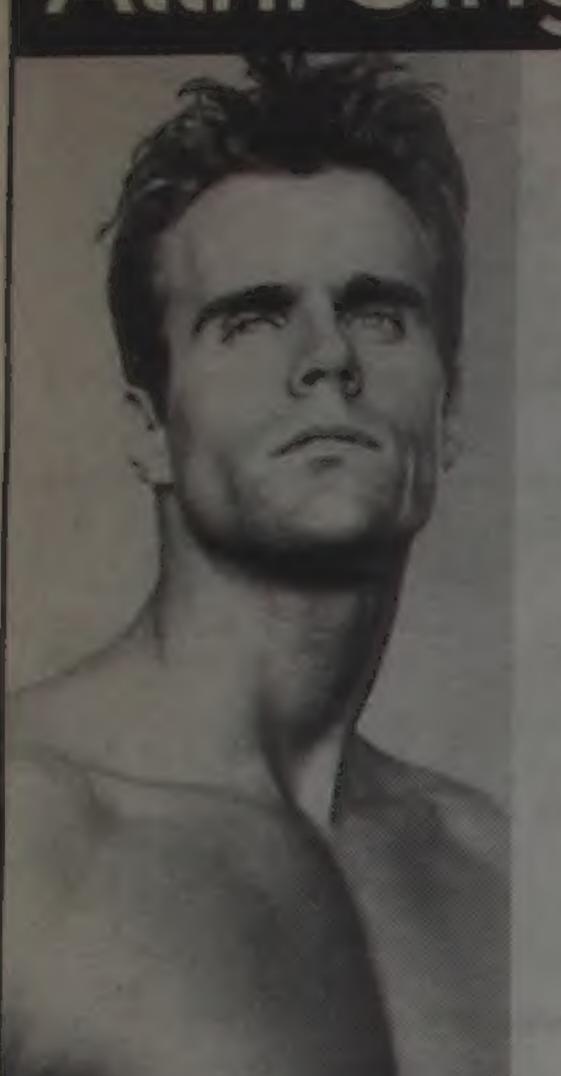






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BY RICHARD BURNETT

The Montreal striptease

"We do not imitate, as we are a model to others," said Pericles, the statesman who opened Athenian democracy to the ordinary citizen, built the magnificent temples and statues on the Acropolis, and created the Athenian empire, not to mention indulged in some same-sex love.

Pericles could just as easily have been talking about Montreal. Now, Montreal may not exactly be the cradle of democracy (though the city was the capital of the original United Province of Canada in 1844 before a drunken Anglo mob torched the parliament building in Old Montreal on April 25, 1849). And while it's true Olympic Stadiumthough widely acclaimed by architects and tourists as one of the world's most beautiful stadiums—isn't exactly the Parthenon, jaded Montrealers do think of the Big O as something of a ruin.

But for centuries Montreal was a gateway to the continent and thus has long been a raucous good-time city, notably in the early 20th century, when Quebec was the only jurisdiction on the continent that didn't introduce Prohibition. So the gamblers, the racketeers, the entertainers and the thirsty all flocked to Montreal. They still do, because Montreal still rocks when most other cities roll up their sidewalks and go to bed. And the city's enormous gay community (estimated at almost 500,000) has truly turned Montreal into a gay mecca.

So hosting the 2006 Gay Games was a no-brainer.

Everybody now knows that Montreal got screwed by the Federation of Gay Games (not to mention Canadian taxpayers, who must foot the

\$500,000 bill for Montreal's winning bid). The city will instead host the inaugural 2006 OutGames sanctioned by the competing Gay and Lesbian International Sports Association.

As of this week, Montreal has registered 4,000 athletes for their games, and Chicago's replacement 2006 Gay Games (deliberately scheduled a week before the Montreal event) has registered 2,000. It is now widely accepted most Americans will attend Chicago while the rest of the world will go to Montreal. (Montreal needs to sign 12,000 athletes and Chicago needs 8,000.)

Despite public declarations to the contrary, the escalating catfight between the FGG and GLISA, and between Montreal and Chicago, has been fairly ugly. That's why everybody will be watching Montreal 2006's April 29 to May 8 USA Registration Week in 62 American cities.

"We've had to reassess the number of Americans attending our event since Chicago announced their Gay Games," Montreal 2006 media rep Jean-Yves Duthel told me this week. "We already have 500 Americans registered and we're hoping for another 300-500 registrations next week."

In a poll of athletes attending the

and Kathleen Webster express disappointment over GLISA's intention to hold their second World OutGames in 2009 in either bidding cities Berlin or Rio de Janeiro. "While this may not be the outcome that many members of the LGBT sport community would have expected," they add, "the FGG respects the right of every organization to define and evolve its own mission."

Yeah, right.

Montreal is also hosting a registration drive in France on May 3-8, which must surely annoy the FGG's Parisbased Mantaci. It's his home turf, after all. "We are now confident that Montréal 2006 will be the largest sport and cultural event ever held in the LGBT community worldwide," says Montreal 2006 CEO Louise Roy, rubbing it in. "It will also be both a financially viable event, and a truly international one. Montrealers are looking forward to welcoming friends from around the world to our beautiful city, and the participation of French-speaking visitors—particularly those from France—will add a special touch to the OutGames."

If you're not one of the 55,000 expected at the star-studded opening and closing ceremonies at the Big O next year, hotshot TV producer Guy

"Whooeee! The strippers in Montreal are amazing!" - David Kopay, NFL icon

2004 EuroGames, 51 per cent said they plan to go to Montreal versus 7 per cent for Chicago. "We haven't found a groundswell of support for Chicago," Duthel says. "But listen: we're not fighting Chicago-we're promoting Montreal."

Duthel also announced this week that Bell Canada Enterprises has signed on as a corporate sponsor and U.S.based Windows Media (which publishes the New York Blade, Genre magazine and the venerable Washington Blade) is now on board as a media sponsor.

I called Chicago media rep Kevin Boyer to get his take on the importance of Montreal's USA Registration Week, but he wasn't available for comment. But in a March 2 open letter, FGG co-presidents Roberto Mantaci

Latraverse has been hired to produce both ceremonies that will be broadcast live on Radio-Canada, along with the rest of the games.

While Montreal gets on with the business of producing the OutGameswhich could have been the best Gay Games the FGG ever hosted—the FGG continues to sign "Gay Games Ambassadors" like the great Billie Jean King and trailblazing gay NFL icon David Kopay. The mindset over at the FGG seems to be "If the superstars support Chicago, then everybody else will follow."

But people like Kopay love coming to Montreal because it's a good-time city. "Whooeee!" Kopay once told me. "The strippers in Montreal are amaz-

Let the games begin. 0





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II ECOMMINI

miternational business gets even more cutthroat than usual in dystopian Market Forces

BY MINISTER FAUST

arket Forces ain't your grandpa's oh-so-witty Asimovian SF, ind it ain't even your dad's Gnostic/ecosophic/metaphysical Philip K. Dick SF. Richard Morgan's latest novel is radical anti-neoliberal/porn/Shotokan karate/handgun chic with slick, fast and lethal BMWs and Saabs. The book includes a bibliography citing Noam Chomsky, Michael Moore and John Pilger, and reads as if it's intended for anyone who's attended a peace rally or anti-IMF/WTO mobilization—that is, anyone who's seen The Corporation or ever uttered the words "convergence centre," "Charlie Kernaghan" or "the Battle of Seattle."

If all that sounds far too heavyhandedly polemical for you, slow down (or maybe speed up); Market Forces is a thrilling, provocative blend of Oliver Stone's Wall Street and Mad Max that doesn't let its pungent socio-political satire get in the way of its rich characterization and SF techno-detail. Set in the England of a few decades from now, Market Forces explores the lives of "Conflict Investment" executives, men and women who broker in the war-equivalent of mutual-funds. Rather than being simple arms traders, CI traders provide trade entire suites of weaponry, telemetry, logistics and intel directly with "Third World" dictators or rebel movements in return for a cut of GNP (from regimes) or a percentage of drug profits (from guerrillas). And when contracts get tendered, these Conflict Investment "zek tivs" don't simply bid—they prove their identifi-

cation with their clients' risk-level in bouts of legally-sanctioned gladiatorial car chases and gunfights on British freeways that end only when one suit brings back another's burnt-up and bullet-ridden credit card.

At the core of Market Forces is antihero Chris Faulkner, the deeply conflicted rising star at the CI firm of Shorn Investments; his wife Carla is his personal mechanic who upgrades his Saab's dials from km/h to KIA. Their marriage is full of potholes, not

the least because both morally-compromised spouses must suffer the diatribes of Chris's father-in-law, England's last living Marxist in a U.S./U.K.-dominated world that regards the UN as a criminally subversive agitator. The climax takes place on the death highways of the "road to success" upon which Chris will either sacrifice beloved people and ideals to save other beloved people and ideals—or be sacrificed himself.

A book with such a clear political target could easily have ended up a multi-car pile-up, but not in Morgan's hands; Market Forces takes its characters seriously, forcing us to ask ourselves when the virtue of personal loyalty must be overthrown by the duty of public responsibility, to determine what we should do when duty is blocked by law, to glean when ends justify means, and to recognize that our high-minded platitudes would probably crumble in the face of a genuine mortal crisis. Market Forces pushes itself far outside the safe and verdant territory of "How do I do the right thing?" and into the burnt-out wastelands of "What's the best I can make out of my own wilful wickedness?"

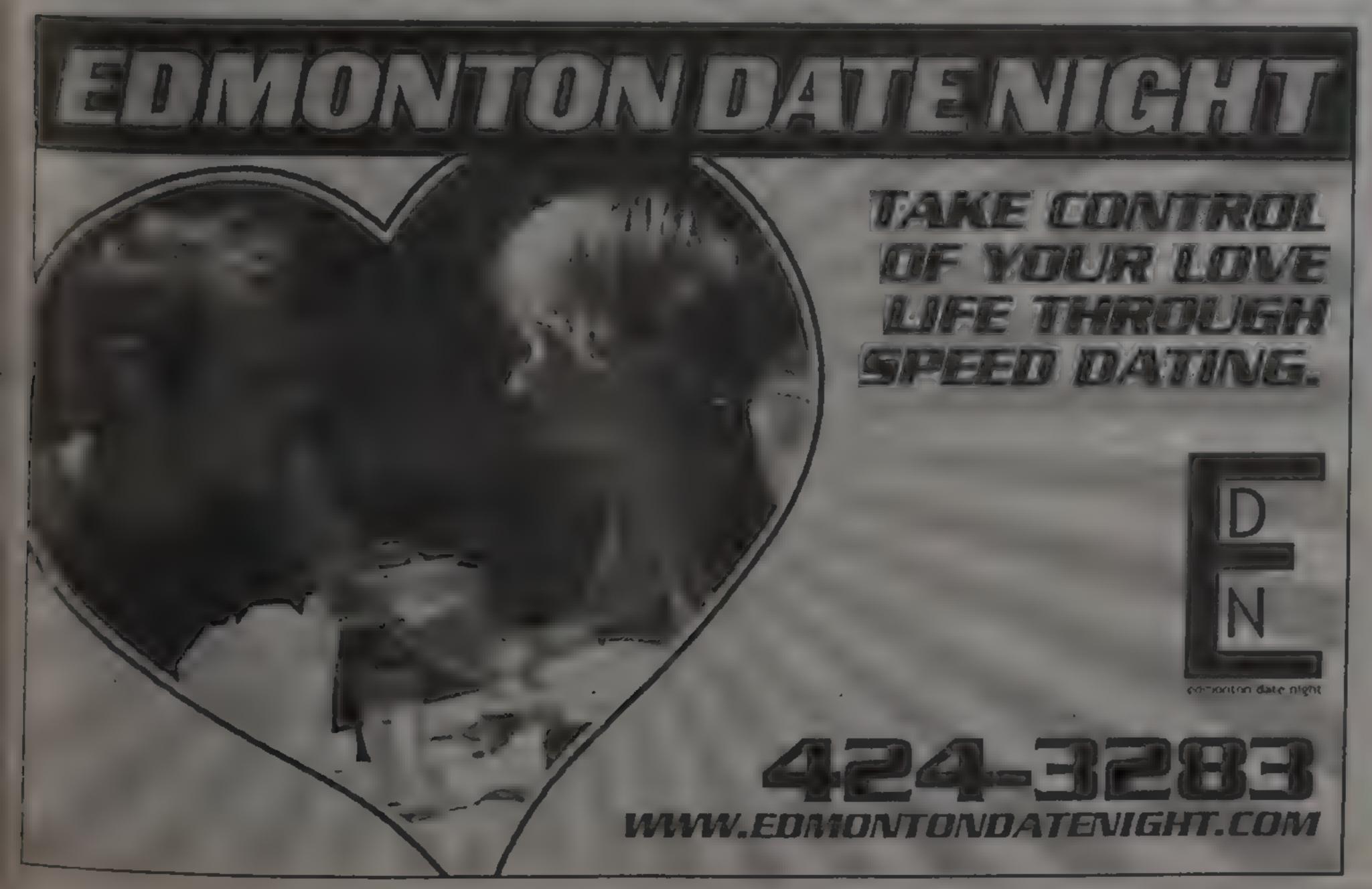
RATHER THAN BEING simplistic ciphers for what's incorrectly labelled "anti-globalization" politics,

Faustian Chris Faulker and his Mephistophelean best friend and boss Mike Bryant are both multidimensional and easily recognizable. You can really like these guys, be dazzled by their hyper-ballsy business and combat style, their guts and even their gear, and then turn the page and absolutely despise their brutal violence and their "banal" corporate crimes, which condemn millions to misery to make mammonists more millions. These are buddies from university or from the office, the brother-in-law or buddy you haven't seen in 10 years who's now air-traipsing over the planet in what must be the coolest job you've never heard of, guys whose jokes make you laugh, whose opportunities make you jealous and whose actions make you shudder. And these are guys who, under the right circumstances, you could easily be, driving expensive vehicles and living in gated communities while your lifestyle and career are literally enslaving and killing countless invisible, faraway strangers.

Plus, hell, the freaking book is fun, packed with terrific SF techno detail and combat chic of martial arts strikers versus grapplers, handguns, death-cars and electrocuting car alarms. (Morgan concedes in his acknowledgements that Market Forces owes a debt to both Mad Max and Rollerball, and it shows in a thrilling way.) If Amazon.com's reader comments are any indication, fans of Morgan's Broken Angels and his PKD Award-winning Altered Carbon will be disappointed by Market Forces, but I loved it, perhaps especially because it denies us an easy, "satisfying" ending, leaving us instead with a disturbing image of what it means to do one's best in the worst of times. O

MARKET FORCES

By Richard Morgan . Del Rey/Ballantine • 441 pp. • \$10.99







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BY DARREN ZENKO

Burning up the Jade

Hey, we sure had some sunshine there for a while, eh? At least, that's what I'm told; I spent most of that time burrowed deep in my videogame nestcamo netting, overstuffed cushions, Nintendo bongos, some kind of bushy red plant I don't know the name of, Bowen Island lager empties—playing the hell out of Jade Empire. Still haven't finished it, though.... I tend to dig around in everything, root through every corner cupboard, take on all the sidetracking odd jobs. It really extends the "play experience."

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Makes you think, though. You're' supposedly on this urgent mission to rescue your kidnapped master from a Chinese (Sinoid, anyway) Darth Vader, but you've got time to indulge in all kinds of dicking around and it doesn't really matter. That's linear gameplay, I guess; what I'd really like to see is a scene at the end of an RPG where the hero shows up at the bad-guy fortress, all powered up and kitted out, calls out the villain, demands the princess or the magic gem or whatever, and the Evil One's like, "The princess? Shit, boy, we kidnapped her last year. Where the hell have you been?"

"Uh, well... I helped an old guy rescue his missing cow, and I spent a lot of time in the casino, and I got a little girl's hairbrush out of a well (a troll had it; tough fight), and... um... I fought against a bunch of bandits, then I fought with another bunch of bandits. And I guess I did take my time gathering up a complete collection of Power Orbs and Secret Crests in order to unlock this wicked alternate costume. Also, I became the Ultimate Fighting champion, helped out an old widow

by an unscrupulous official, learned to water-ski, raised some ponies, flirted with six or seven barmaids, got a haircut and learned the True Meaning of Christmas... turns out it's a sixth-level elemental attack that turns enemies into little snowmen. It kicks ass!"

"Really? Well, kick ass somewhere else, Kris Kringle; we sacrificed the

who'd been cheated out of her farm' for something and the prosecutor starts calling all these character witnesses: "He took healing herbs right out of my bedroom!" "He stole wares off my countertop right in front of me, in broad daylight!" It blew my tiny little Super Nintendo world apart. I was hoping for a little more of that kind of thing from Jade, considering you're constantly choosing between "good,"

I helped an old guy rescue his missing cow, and I spent a lot of time in the casino, and I got a little girl's hairbrush out of a well

Princess to Molkthor six months ago. The Age of Darkness is upon us!"

"Ah, shit."

Maybe it'll happen; hey, maybe it already has. The closest thing to standard RPG behaviour coming up and biting the player on the ass that I've seen was in (if I recall correctly) Chrono Trigger. As in most RPGs, in Trigger you could basically loot people's houses with impunity... or so it seemed, because later you end up being on trial

"evil" and "neutral" (well, "wussily beatific," "prickish" and "blandly businesslike," anyway) responses. Doesn't really seem to be working out that way. The story's a one-track cartpath, far as I can tell, which is industry standard... but you always want more.

Ah, but more takes time, which costs money! This was originally supposed to be a kind of nitpick piece, a cred-saving hedge against the unreservedly praiseful review I'd published elsewhere, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that all my "nitpicks" were really just standard geekboy impossibilities. Like, I suppose BioWare could have had combat extend more into the Z dimension with aerial moves and stuff, making it truer to its wire-flying kung-fu-cinema source material, and they could have had real branching storylines, and they could have had base-building... and they especially could have had full character-model customization. But what can you do? If BioWare had put a priority on satisfying my love of playing dress-up-dolly, Jade would've had a ship date of 2012 and cost \$300 a copy. The models available are pretty good, though; there's probably someone there who looks sort of like a character you might have designed if you had a toolkit. That is, unless you're into making really retarded looking dudes: Jade is too tasteful to include, say, an obese cross-dresser with a Mohawk haircut and a welding mask.

I will pick one nit, though, a glitch in the overall tightness of the game that irked me right from the get-go and hasn't stopped. See, when dialogue sessions or cutscenes are taking place, Jade Empire goes into a letterboxish pseudo-cinema aspect-ratio mode, giving it that movielike feel while still leaving room for the subtitles and dialogue options. The problem is, that ratio's always changing depending on how much text they need to cram into the bottom bar. Over the course of a single conversation the height of the display area will change several times.

It's really sloppy and distracting, and I can't understand why it has to be that way; i know there's a thumbstick scroll available, but it hardly ever gets used. They'd rather fudge the display dimensions seven or eight times in a single scene than make you scroll. It bugs me, like an itch. It makes disbelief's suspension just a little more tenuous, it makes immersion shallower. I will never, ever, ever forgive them for this lapse in design taste. Bastards!

And that's my last word on Jade Empire.

Maybe. 0



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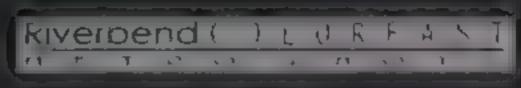














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Let's do away with standards!

Education expert
Alfie Kohn decries
Alberta's adoption of
standardized tests
for grade-schoolers

BY WAYNE ARTHURSON

In 2004, then-Learning Minister Lyle Oberg introduced a pilot pro-Lject that required students who failed provincewide exams in Grade 3 to write another test in Grade 4. Despite opposition to the plan from parents and educators, more than 1,000 students were required to rewrite tests. But following complaints that the tests were causing even more stress among struggling students, the new Education Minister Gene Zwozdesky has decided to cancel the project. "I have concluded that there must be another was that we can help those students," Zwozdesky said last week. "I'm going to suggests that we look at some form of diagnostic testing."

Alberta Education requires students in Grade 3, 6, 9 and 12 to complete achievement tests. There are many reasons for such tests, ranging from the practical (seeing if kids are actually learning things) to the political (high scores can be used for bragging rights and to show that our education system works and doesn't need change or extra funding). But one education expert says the idea of standardized testing doesn't work and school systems across North America who use such tests should consider getting rid of them altogether. Alfie Kohn, who was recently in Edmonton to speak at the teachers' convention, said standardized testing is a plague on education, a plague that wipes out innovative instruction and beats down some of the best teachers and administrators.

"Ironically," Kohn says, "that plague has been unleashed in the name of improving schools. Invoking such terms as tougher standards, accountability and raising the bar, people with little understanding of how children learn have imposed a heavy-handed, top-down, test-driven version of school reform that is lowering the quality of education. It has taken some educators and parents a while to realize that the rhetoric of standards is turning schools into giant test-prep centres, effectively closing off intellectual

inquiry and undermining enthusiasm for learning and teaching. It has taken even longer to realize that this is not a fact of life, like the weather—that is, a reality to be coped with—but rather, a political movement that must be opposed."

It's called the Tougher Standards movement, Kohn says, and standardized testing is kind of the Holy Grail of the whole thing. Standardized tests, the theory goes, ensure that our students are learning what they are supposed to be learning. "People from parents to presidents have begun to sound like a cranky, ill-informed radio talk-show hosts," he says, "with the result that almost anything can be done to students and to schools, no matter how illconsidered, as long as it is done in the name of raising standards or accountability. For one thing, it gets motivation wrong. Most talk of standards assumes that students ought to be thinking constantly about improving their performance. This

single-minded concern with results turns out to be remarkably simplistic. The assumption that achievement is all that counts overlooks a substantial body of psychological research suggesting that a focus on how well one is doing is very different from a focus on what one is doing. Moreover, a preoccupation

POLICY

with performance often undermines interest in learning, quality of learning, and a desire to be challenged."

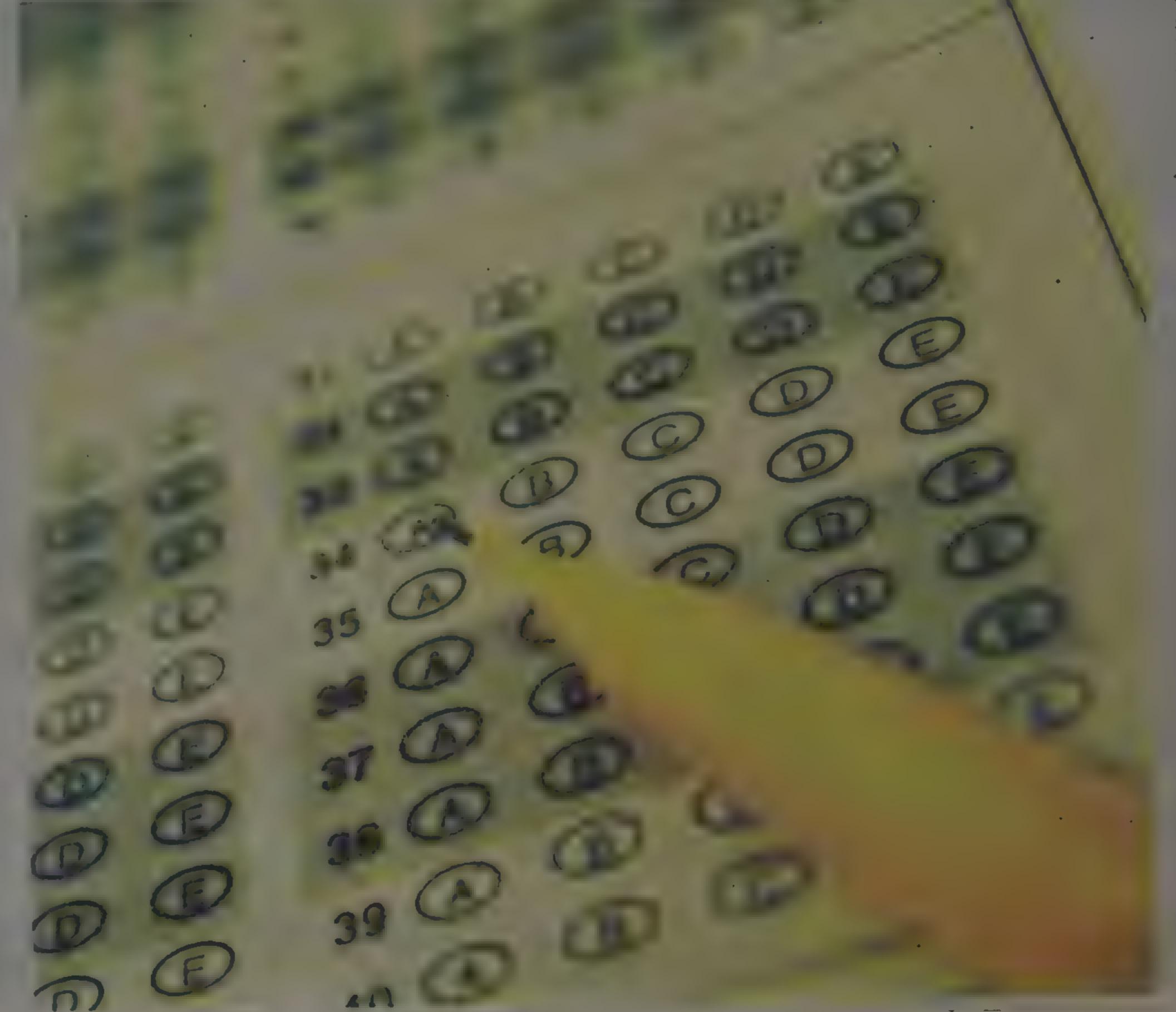
he says. The Tougher Standards movement is big on back to basics (namely the three Rs—reading, writing and 'rithmetic—which, of course, is actually one R, a W and Arithmetic spelt incorrectly). However, Kohn argues this system tends to treat children as inert objects, preparing lists of objectives or core

knowledge and pouring it down their throats. "This is a model that might be described as outdated," he says, "were it not for the fact that, frankly, there never was a time when it worked all that well."

It also incorrectly judges what evaluation and improvement mean. "In practice," Kohn says, "excellence, higher standards and raising the bar all refer to scores on standardized tests, many of them multiple-choice, norm-referenced and otherwise flawed. Indeed, much of the discussion about education today is arrested at the level of 'Test scores are low; make them go up.' All the limits of, and problems with, such testing amount to a serious indictment of the version of school reform that relies on these tests. Weaving its way through all these ideas is an implicit assumption about rigour and challenge namely, that harder is always better. The reductive and really rather silly idea that tests, texts and teachers can all be judged on the single criterion of plaints about dumbing-down education and strident calls to raise the bar Its first cousin is the idea that if some. thing isn't working very well—say requiring students to do homework of dubious value—then insisting on more of the same will surely solve the problem. As Harvey Daniels puts it the dominant philosophy of fixing schools today consists of saying, in effect, 'What we're doing is okay, we just need to do it harder, longer stronger, louder, meaner—and we'll have a better country."

THERE ARE MANY WAYS for people to fight against the overuse of stan dardized testing or at least deal with them without sacrificing creative and interesting education. If teach. ers have to prepare students for test Kohn says they should do no more than what is absolutely necessar and then get back to what he call "the real learning." "Some expert have argued that a relatively shor period of introducing students to the content and format of the tests in sufficient to produce scores equivalent to those obtained by students who have spent the entire year in test-prep mode," he says. "And whatever time is spent on test preparation should be as creative and worthwhile as possible. Avoid tradi tional drilling whenever you can

Another approach is to complain loud enough so that the politicians take notice. Note that when it was announced that Alberta Education was eliminating the pilot project to have Grade 4 students take achieve ment tests if they didn't do well in Grade 3, Minister Zwozdesky did sal that there was a lot of complaints from parents. "Also," Kohn sa) "challenge politicians, corporal executives and others who talk piously about the need to raise the bar, impose tougher standard ensure accountability and so on i take the tests themselves-and, P haps even to allow their scores to line published in the newspaper. This especially important in the case of high-stakes exit exams, which are increasingly being used to den) diplomas to students who don't pas them, regardless of their academi records. The reality, of course, is that few adults could pass these tests Therefore, public officials should be prepared to justify their demand that teenagers must do something that they themselves cannot. And if the refuse this challenge, they show called upon to defend that." O



Hire education

Handy tips on uncovering the hidden summer job market

BY WAYNE ARTHURSON

tremember my first summer job. I was in high school and it was during the big oil boom in Calgary. lobs were a dime a dozen. You could walk into any store, restaurant, company, whatever, and find a job that paid pretty decently. If it sucked, you could walk away without a word and find another job that same day. Good times, good times.

That first summer job was amazing: I was a parking valet for a tony restaurant and all the big-time, highrolling oil dudes would pull up in their Porsches, Mercedeses and highend Mustangs, toss me the keys and a couple of bucks and I'd pull away. Heck, they didn't even care that the ink on my license was still wet or that I could barely work a clutch. Once I got out of first, there was no problem, but I would always stall trying to pull away. No matter-the customer was already in the restaurant and never heard me grinding

away at their transmission. I got minimum wage but more than tripled that in tips. Heaven.

I didn't answer an ad to get that job, or see a sign in the window. A friend's dad had a well-servicing company and when he heard I was looking for work, he recalled a conversation another friend had overheard at that restaurant. The manager was complaining about staff

shortages and so I dropped in, filled out an application and got the job.

Which brings to mind my first tip for finding a good summer job: the really cool jobs, the ones the you remember more than 20 years later, the ones that will assist you in your career path, will not be advertised in plain view. Sure, the newspapers are full of job ads, but you could spend your entire summer flipping through the classifieds without finding anything of interest. And of course, there are thousands of job searchers reading the same paper, so competition for those jobs is more intense. Also, most jobs in the paper aren't geared to students, so that also limits your options.

But hey, I hear you say, what about the internet? Sure, the Net has increased the number of job opportunities and listings but you've got the same situation with the newspaper: thousands of job hunters and only a fraction of the jobs geared towards summer work and students.

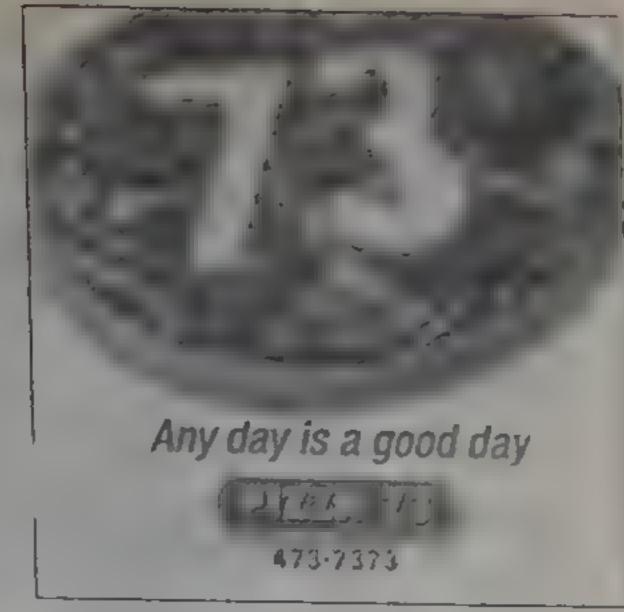
Here's something to mull over: despite the fact that the majority of job searchers use newspapers and the internet, only 20 per cent of the available jobs are advertised in those locations. That means that 80 per cent are not. That's a lot of work not in plain view. So how do you find those jobs? Research my friends, research.

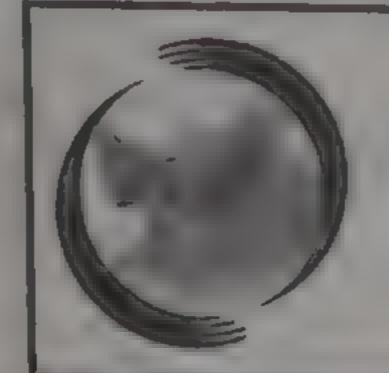
FIRST, LET'S TAKE a step back. If you're going to look for summer job this year, you need to be ready before you job hunt. You will need a résumé. Your résumé is a marketing tool-you have to sell yourself and promote your abilities and skills. You want to show them that you are the best candidate for the position. This means the more work you're willing to put into your résumé, the better it will pay off. Any solid word processing program will contain some good sample résumés which you can pop your own information into with ease. Don't be too fancy and stick with a basic white paper—forget the coloured stuff!

Next, think about what you have

to offer to employers. List your interests, knowledge, skills and accomplishments. Consider what you have learned in your academic program,

SEE NEXT PAGE





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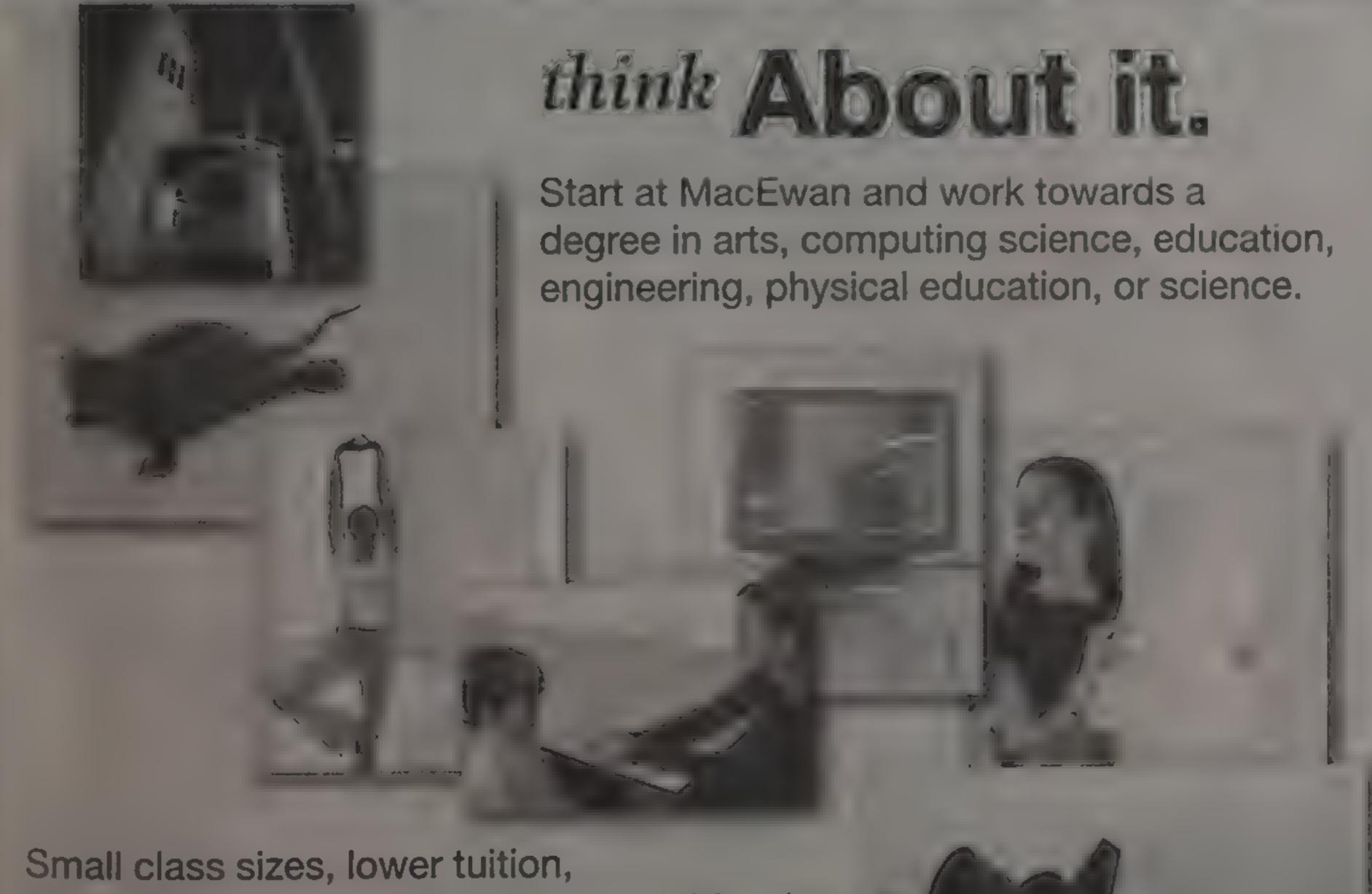
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Continued from previous page

through projects, papers and study, as well as your volunteer and previous work experience. Sign up for any career or job-hunting workshops for more assistance in identifying your skills. If you want some suggestions on résumé-writing, you can check out www.damngood.com for samples, tips and answers to some tough questions.

kind of job you want. Do you want an office job, something in retail, hospitality or maybe something involving manual labour or working outdoors? If you can't figure that out, think about your interests and try to translate those interests into a few job ideas. If you're looking for something related to your career, then you probably already know what kind of job you want.

NOW THAT YOU'VE DECIDED on a

what kind of job your looking for. Ask if they know anybody who works in that industry and if they do, request an introduction or a phone number. It's called networking and who knows what might result from it? If you put out to the universe that you're looking for a job, a dad's friend may know someone who knows a guy who... you get the idea.

Also, discover what companies hire for the kind of jobs you want,

the name of a contact person, and a phone and fax number so you can send a résumé and find out if there are any positions currently available. Phone numbers can be found in the Yellow Pages, the internet or sometimes the Canadian Career Directory, which lists 900 employers throughout Canada, the qualifications they look for, contact information and whether or not they hire summer students.

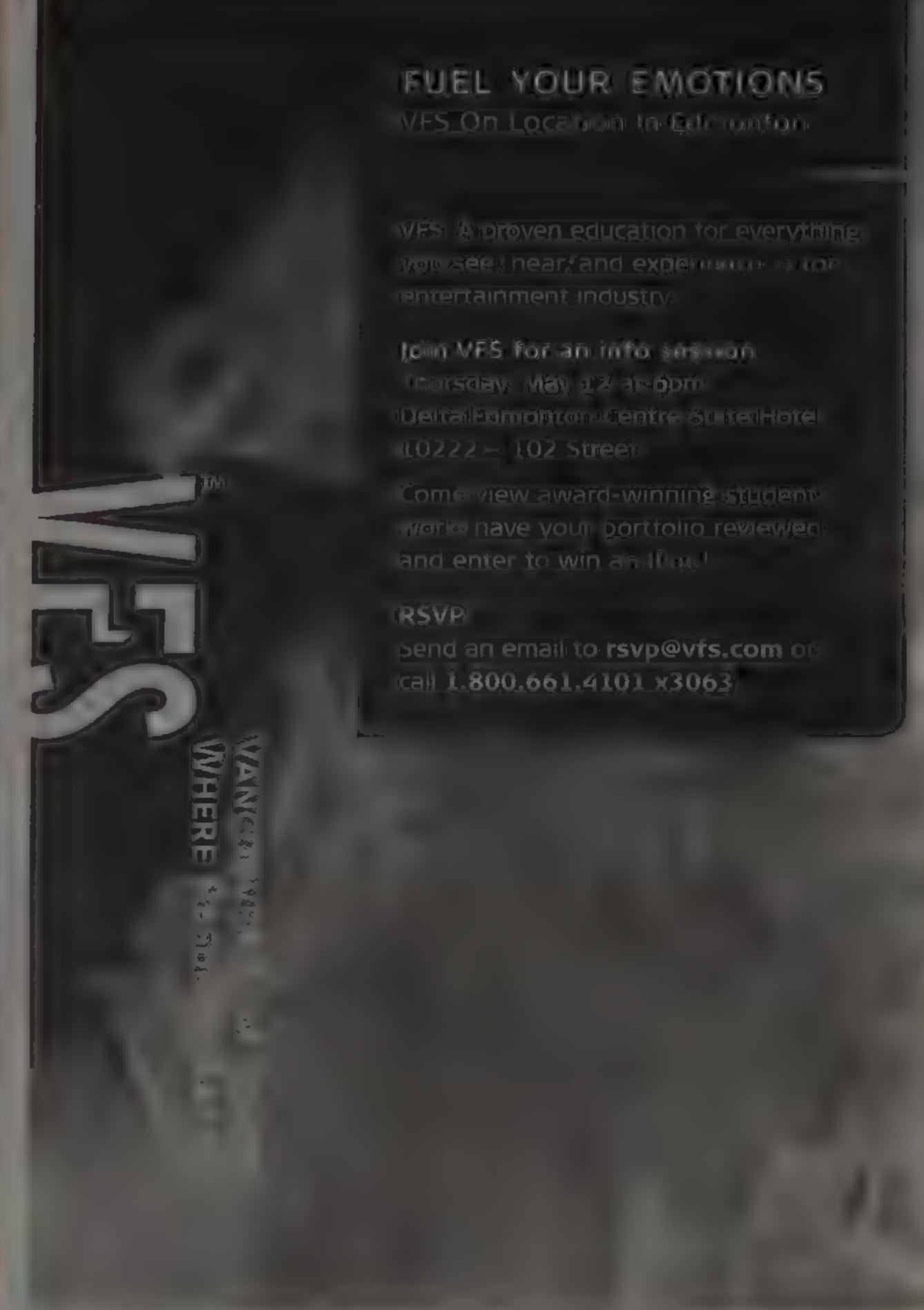
There are also many other places to help you in your job search. If

you're a post-secondary student, your institution should have a career and job placement service. They'll also have plenty of tips and ideas to help. And don't forget Hirea-Student. They are geared for summer jobs for students and have plenty of listings and advice ready for the taking.

One last thing: if you're in postsecondary, you should have been thinking about this a couple of months ago. If you're in high school. it's time to get cracking! O



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Information technology is back and in the black

As the IT market recovers, NAIT graduates are getting good jobs in a booming economy

s a child, Hardeep Sandhu loved taking things apart and putting Athem back together. "Vacuum cleaners, television sets, VCRs, remote controls, I wanted to break them down, figure out how they worked and see if I could improve them," recalls Hardeep, now 23. "It drove my parents crazy. I never broke anything, in my mind I considered my curiosity a gift so they indulged me."

Graduating from M.E. LaZerte Composite High School in 1999, Hardeep decided he wanted to continue his passion for technology and enroll in the Computer Systems Technology (CST) program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. The fact that the entire information technology industry was in a slump after the crash of 2001 didn't concern him. "Any industry you

want to go into will have its ups and downs - the important thing is to find something you really enjoy doing and work hard at it," says Hardeep. "Every influential company and major organization around relies on IT and for that reason I knew that it would always be around. So I applied." Hardeep enjoyed the two-year program, which provides a solid foundation in business data processing, database concepts and data communication systems, and graduated last June with honours. He already had three job offers, with a contract management firm, a utility company and CGI Information Technology Systems in Edmonton. where he now works as a Microsoft .NET developer. "I love it here. The people are great, they know their stuff and I really enjoy the work I am doing," says Hardeep. "NAIT helped me a lot. With the skills I learned there, I can go anywhere. I have people calling me with job offers all the time and it's good to know that I have skills that people need and are willing to pay a healthy amount for."

Hardeep was one of 149 graduates from the CST Class of 2004; within months of their graduation last August,

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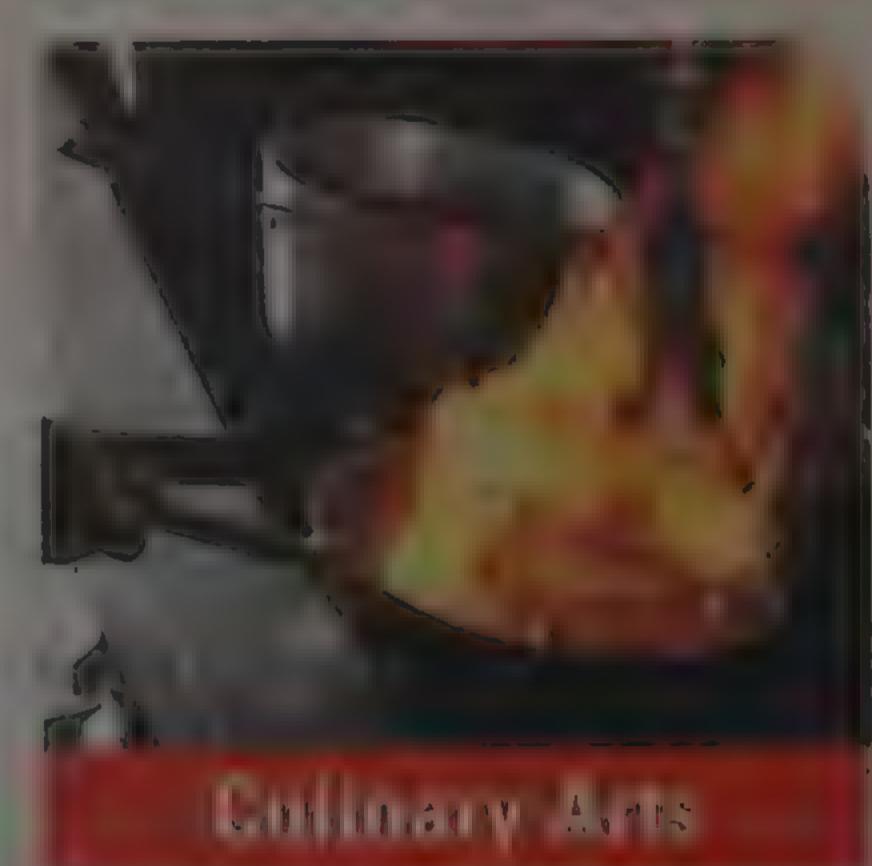
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more than 85 per cent of the class had found jobs. That's a huge jump above the previous year's graduating class, just 66.5 per cent of whom had found jobs within the first few months after leaving NAIT.

nology Class of 2004 have already found jobs; that's a 27 per cent increase from the employment rate a few months after graduation for the previous year's class. NAIT's four-year Bachelor of Applied Information Systems Technology also boasts a job placement of more than 90 per cent for the Class of 2004.

"We are seeing a real resurgence in the job market for our graduates after a lull over the last three or four years and that's great news," says Garry Bridge, Dean of Applied Media and Information Technology at NAIT. "People are realizing that information technology affects every part of the economy. Resource companies, health care firms, banks, retail stores - they all use information technology to track revenues and expenses, manage and transfer data, provide security. And those companies need graduates from institutes like NAIT to stay ahead and compete in the global economy."

Christine Bester, also an honours More than 93 per cent of NAIT's graduate from the CST Class of 2004, Telecommunications Engineering Tech- decided to diversify her skills after a

decade of working as a registered nurse. "I was aware of the demand for professionals with IT and medical cross training," says Christine, now 33. "Aside from Internet surfing and e-mail, my computer knowledge was limited, but the thought of applying my nursing background in a new IT/business environment was very appealing. NAIT gave me a realistic idea of what to expect in that type of working environment after graduation."

Christine is also employed by CGI

and has been outsourced to Alberta Wellnet, a branch of Alberta Health and Wellness, where she serves as a Clinical Business Analyst. Her job involves the technical and business integration of the Alberta Electronic Health Record, an information network that links community physicians, pharmacist, hospitals and other health care professionals across the province. Christine says, "Coordinating liaisons among all these professionals is great. I really enjoy the work, the new

business environment and the people. I'm very pleased with my decision to enter into this field." When she applied to the program two years ago, she was "naive" about any lull in the IT marketplace and urges other potential students to get into IT if that's where their dreams lie. "I'm a firm believer that if you have an education, apply yourself and can present the necessary skills, the market doesn't matter. You'll always be marketable, and you'll always like what you're doing."



Spring

Art History I Mon. - Fri., May 2 - 20, 9 am - noon, City Centre, \$511, 3 credits

Art History II Mon. - Fri., May 24 - June 10, 9 am - noon, City Centre, \$511, 3 credits

Darkroom Essentials 4 Mon., May 30 - June 20, 6 - 9 pm, City Centre, \$139

Summer

Exploring Watercolour Intermediate June 20 - 24, 10 am - 3 pm

Landscapes in Acrylics 4 Wed, July 6 - 27, 6:30 - 9:30 pm

Project Photography 4 Sat, July 9 - 30, 9:30 - noon

Painting Flowers with Watercolour July 11 - 15, 1 - 3:30 pm

Intro to Painting July 18 - 22, 10 am - 3 pm

Colour Theory in Practical Use July 25 - 29, 10 am - 3 pm

Figurative & Abstract Sculpture Aug. 8 - 12, 10 am - 3 pm

The 10 Best Secrets for Drawing Animals Aug. 8 - 12, 1 - 3:30 pm

Landscape Painting in Watercolour Aug. 15 - 19, 10 am - 3 pm

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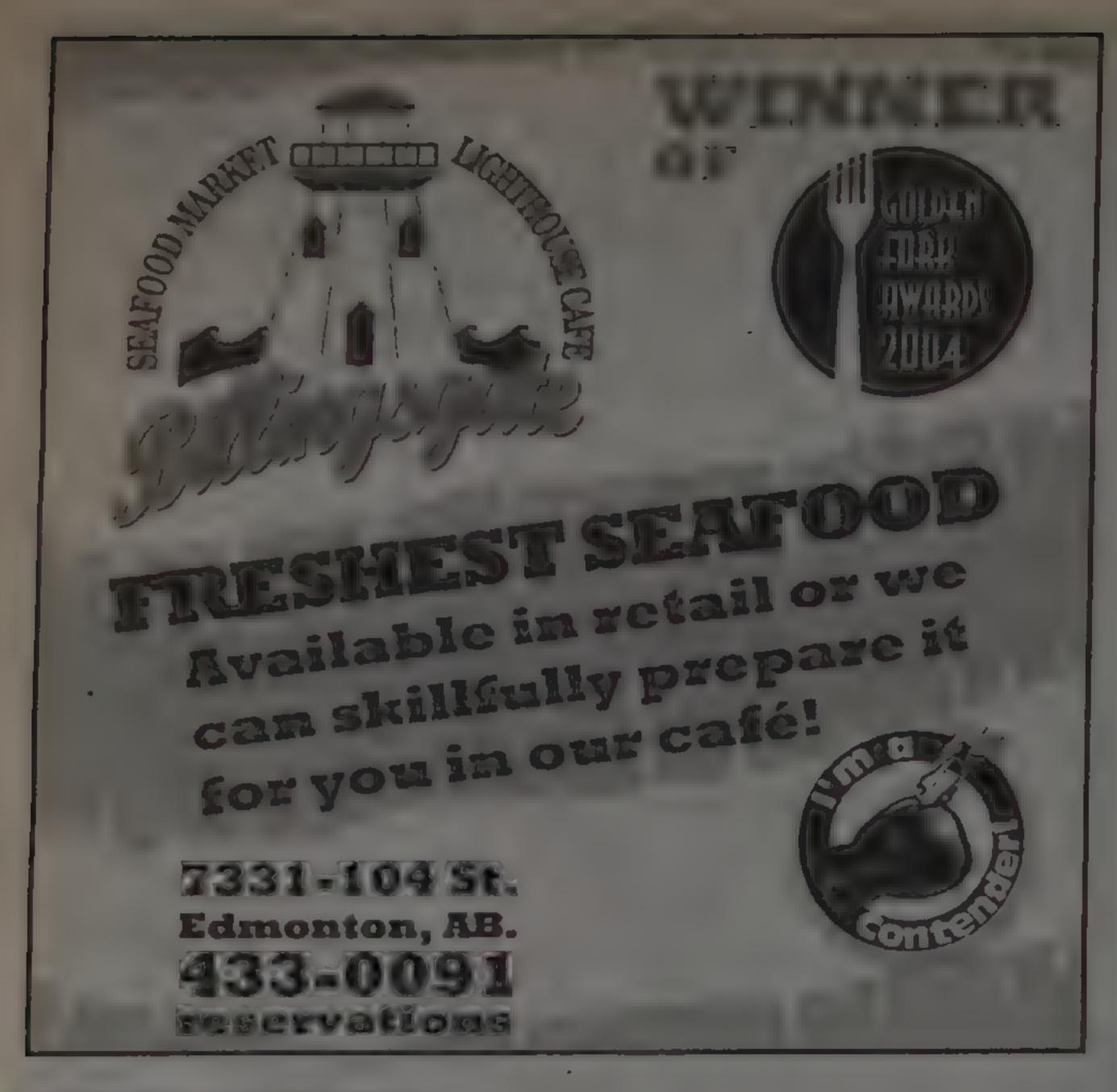
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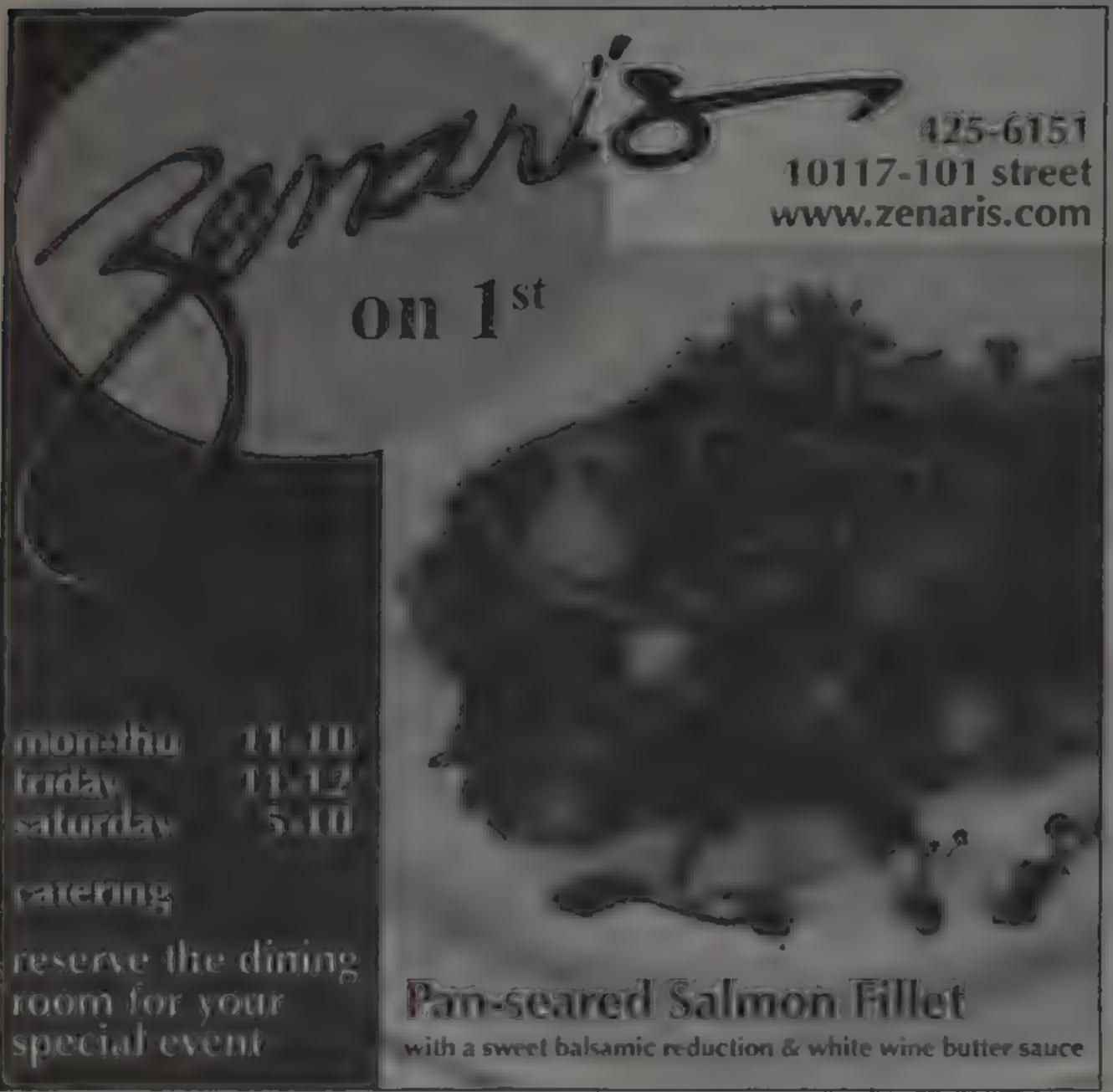
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An oc-Cajun for celebration

I reward my system for fighting off a nasty cold with a spicy meal at Louisiana Purchase

BY IAIN ILICH

fles, I hate the runny nose and I especially hate the fact that it knocks my tastebuds offline for at least a few days. When you're sick, everything tastes like styrofoam, which from the standpoint of someone who needs to

file a restaurant review, is more than a little inconvenient.

Thankfully, after what felt like the better part of a week, my immune system finally fought back and restored my lost senses of taste and smell. And what better way to

CAJUN

celebrate the return of my tastebuds than to take my wife out for a springtime dinner at Louisiana Purchase, a funky Cajun restaurant near the Railtown district in downtown Edmonton? Nothing like a bit of spicy Cajun cookery to teach my poor, recovering tongue a lesson.

The interior of Louisiana Purchase is colourful and eclectic, with deep purple walls, lime-green accents and lots of brick and exposed concrete. The vibe is both fun and quirky, from the giant wall display of hot sauce bottles to the accordion-heavy zydeco music pumping through the speakers. (The soundtrack to our meal gradually evolved into a pleasant blend of classic jazz and soul.)

Our server brought us a glass of breadsticks (yes, you read that correctly), and set about taking our order. As luck would have it, it was Monday, which she informed us was





tumbalaya Night. While the regular title of their Louisiana Jambalaya—a mex of ham, chicken and smoked sausage with peppers, tomatoes and re early just shy of \$11, on Mondays and Tuesdays it goes for a paltry 5.7.50). My wife decided to give it a try, leaving me to choose something trom the remaining non-seafood items. (I'm allergic.) Even though the menu is fairly sea-centric, I found an intriguing dish called Cottonpickin' Chicken (\$16.95), which the menu calls a "grilled spiced breast of chicken topped with maple-cranberry smoked back bacon and provolone cheese, with ancho-chile cream." How could I say no?

As for starters, I decided that I needed to try a bowl of their sausage and chicken gumbo (\$4.95), a soup composed of chicken, sausage, okra, onions, tomatoes and green peppers, with a thick and spicy tomato base. My wife opted for a small Caesar salad (\$4.95), which she's recently taken a liking to. To drink, I went for a bottle of Edmonton microbrewery Alley Kat's Alligator "Blackened" Lager (\$4.25), which is specially brewed for Louisiana Purchase. My wife, who had a bit of a headache, picked a Diet Coke (\$1.95) instead.

While waiting for our soup and salad, we chowed down on the somewhat underbaked breadsticks, noting that they'd been "Cajunified" by the addition of a sprinkling of "Cajun spice."

WITHIN A FEW MINUTES, the gumbo and Caesar salad had arrived, shifting our focus from the bread to the main event. Though my wife enjoyed her Caesar, it was the gumbo that stole the show. The gumbo was, in a word, sensational. It was thick and slippery, the result of a healthy amount of okra (also known as gumbo), and spicy enough to dismiss any lingering concerns about my senses still being impaired by my receding cold. I could just as happily have eaten another couple of bowls of gumbo, but alas, other dishes were about to arrive. I scooped out as much as I could, and was tempted to mop up the rest with the last, sad-



looking breadstick still standing limply in its glass.

I wasn't sure what to expect from my chicken, which arrived shortly after my bowl had been cleared. It looked different from what I'd expected, and was sitting in a lake of creamy, orange-coloured sauce. It turned out to be very different, but very good. The chicken was well-seasoned with typical Cajun spices, the ancho-chile cream sauce was subtle but nicely complementary to the

veggies were neither too crisp nor too mushy.

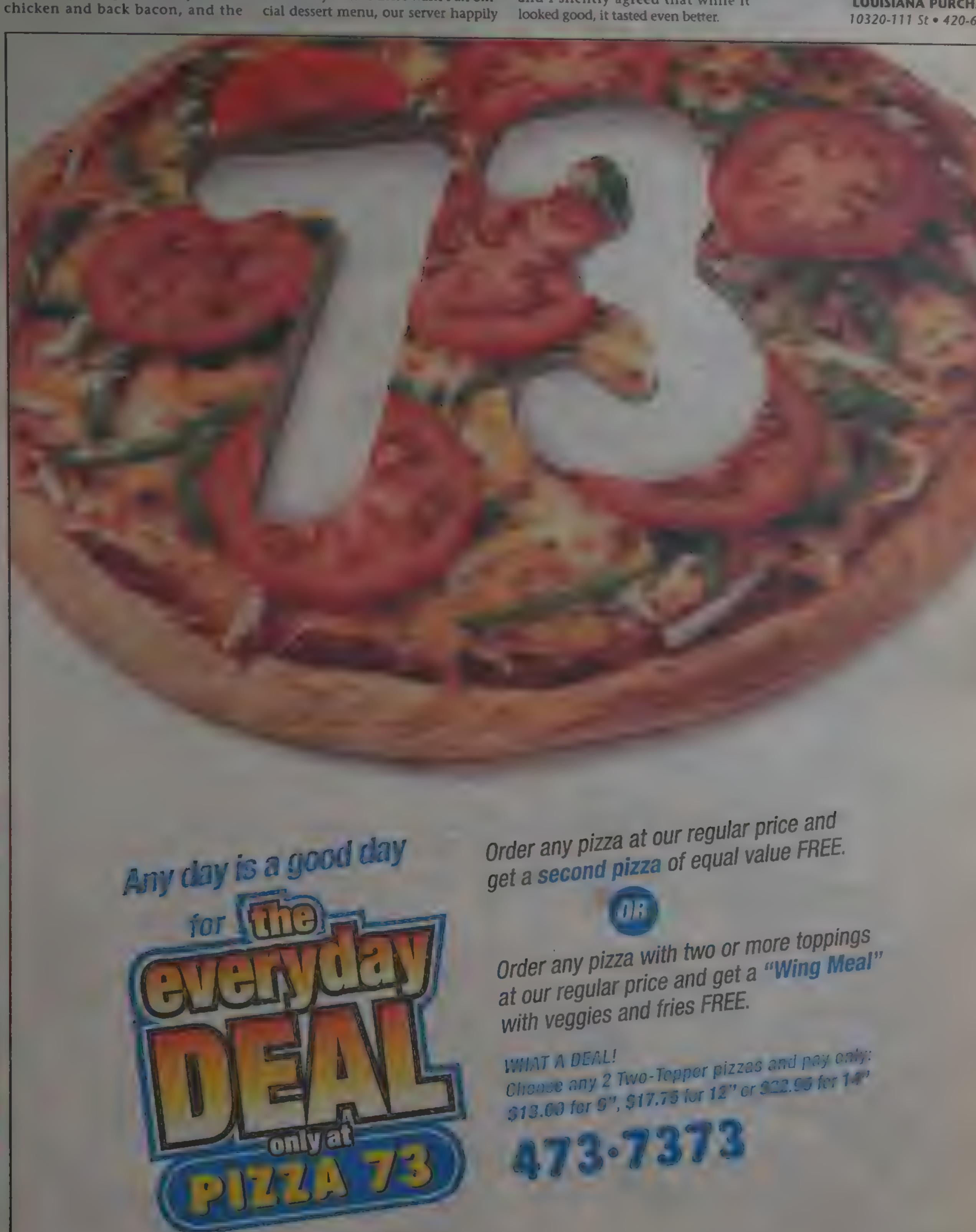
When I grabbed a bite of my wife's jambalaya, it instantly reminded me of one of my favourite West African street foods, jollof rice, which is usually made with similar ingredients. It was good, though filling enough for my wife to only be able to make it through half of her admittedly large portion.

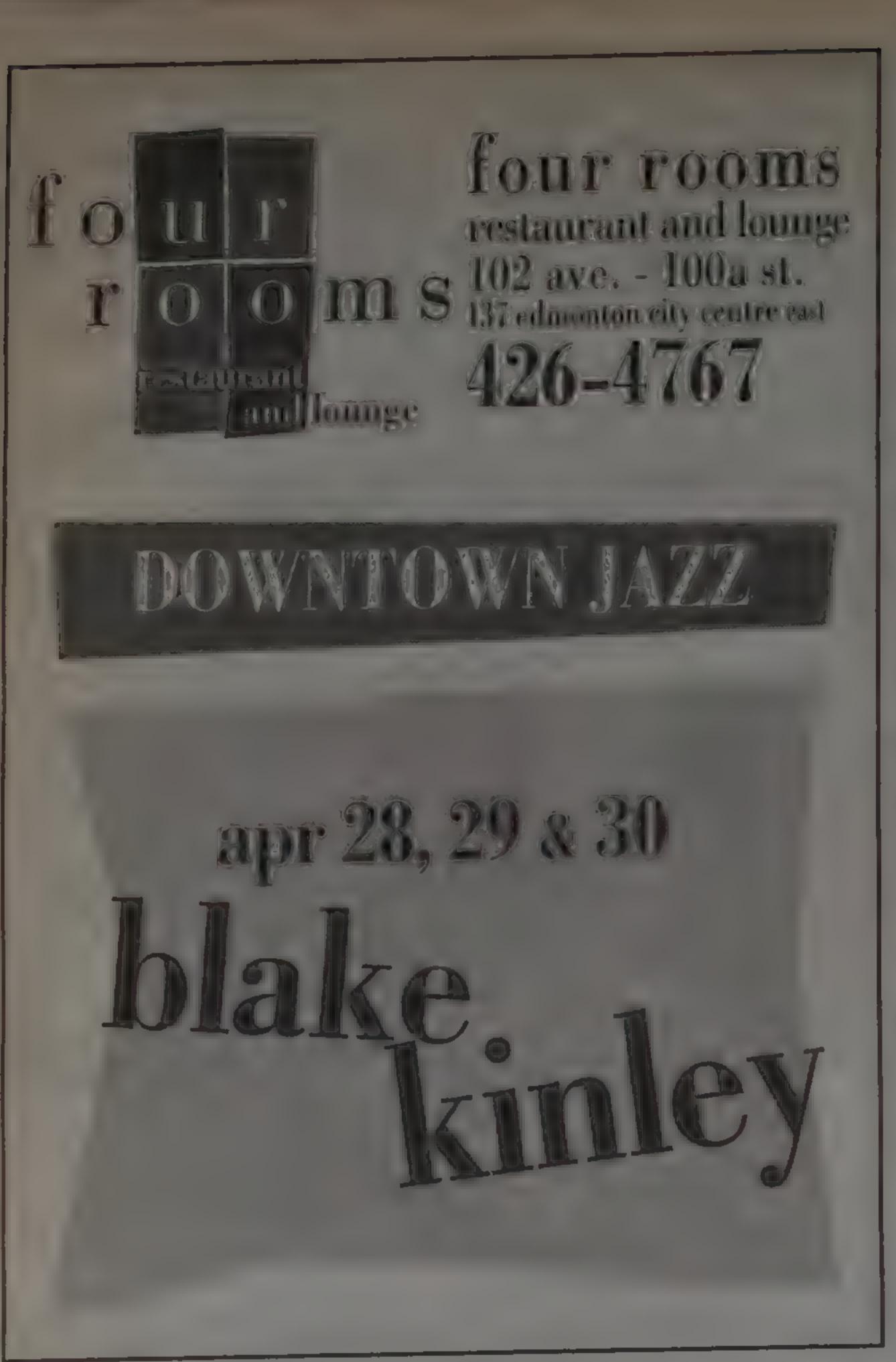
For dessert, we wanted something chocolatey. While there wasn't an official dessert menu, our server happily

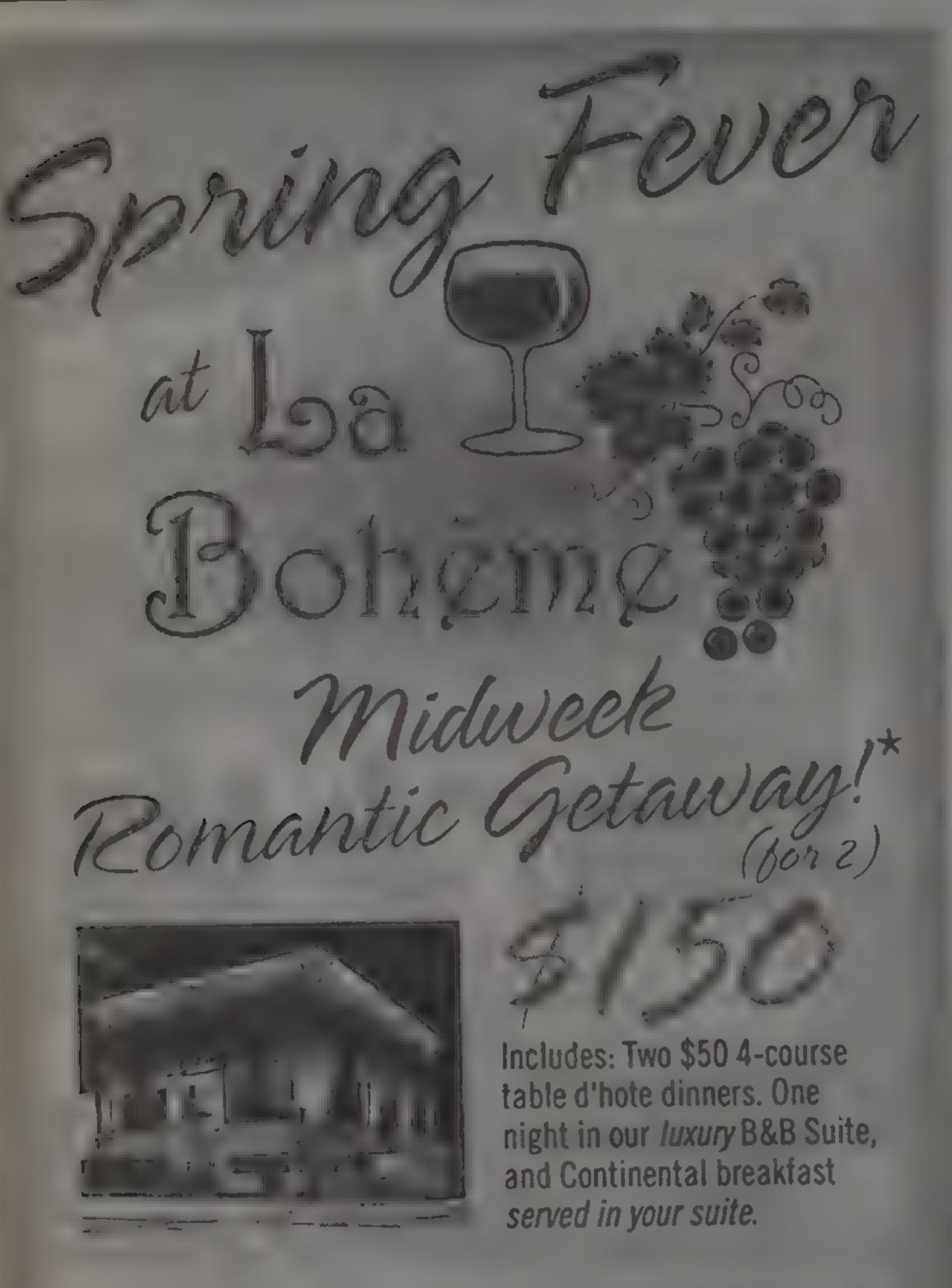
rattled off the available options. The most chocolatey item on her list was Mississippi Mud Pie Cheesecake (\$5:25), a slice of chocolate cheesecake with a layer of chocolate mousse on top, garnished with a few strawberries, a large dollop of whipped cream and a slice of blood orange. The couple at the neighbouring table craned their necks when the plate arrived, unable to disguise their curiosity. Over forkfuls of rich, decadent mousse, my wife and I silently agreed that while it looked good, it tasted even better.

For just over \$49 including tax, we'd had a delightful meal that both thoroughly shocked and awed my recovering tastebuds. The gumbo was delicious, the chicken supplied an interesting combination of tastes and the rice was a friendly reminder that Heritage Days, along with the Nigerian pavilion's jollof rice, was only a few more months away. Ah, summer lt's almost here. O

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A Select setback

Slow service, uninspiring presentation mar visit to Café Select's new southside location

BY CHRIS BOUTET

urtles, as you may recall from junior high science class, are famous for their longevity—the average American box turtle, for example, can live upwards of 130 years. Still, while undoubtedly interesting, this fact seems to have done little to guarantee a long, healthy life for off-Whyte mainstay the Turtle Creek Café, which closed its doors late last year ostensibly for renovations, and eventually for good. But when you have a location as good as the corner spot on 109 Street and 84 Ave that Turtle Creek left vacant, it was clear to folks in the neighbourhood that the space wouldn't stay empty for long-and sure enough, the beginning of April saw the space reopened as Café Select, sister restaurant to the cozy late-night wine-and-chat destination of the same name just across the river.

As a former downtown resident, I had been to the Select on 106 Street

and 100 Ave many a time, but my visits had become increasingly rare since my relocation to the Whyte Ave area, and so I was excited about the prospect of having a Select open up kitty-corner from my apartment. But seeing as there's a rule of thumb that says you should try and give a new restaurant at least a month to get the hang of things—especially if you're planning to review it—I held off on my first visit until early this week (almost a month, anyhow), hoping

CAFE

this would assure a pleasant evening out. Sadly, however, my girlfriend and I left our late-evening meal feeling, well, a little disappointed.

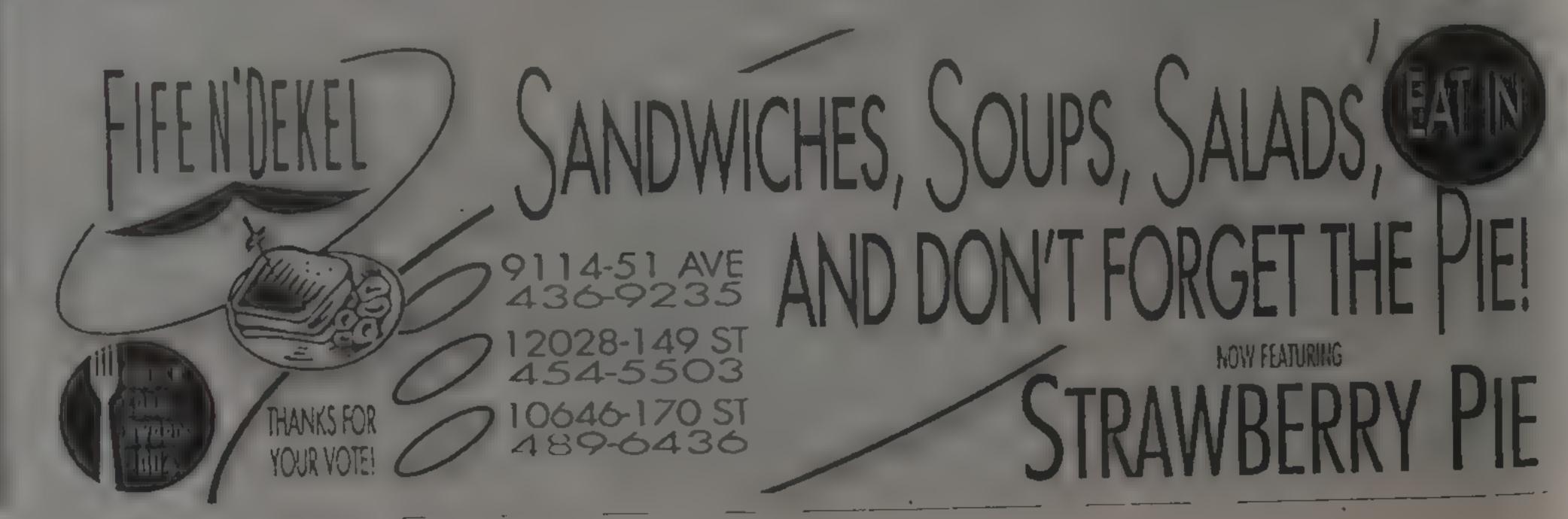
We arrived at the tail-end of the dinner rush, and only a few tables lingered on the main floor of the open-aired two-level eating area. We were shown to a cozy table for two off the main atrium, and while waiting for the server, we had a chance to take in the renovations. Surprisingly, Select seems to have done little to change the old Turtle Creek's curious layout, with the stairs to the upper level you have to duck under on your way to the patio and the oddlyplaced bar taking up prime space in the dead centre of the main floor. Overall, the changes are more of a facelift than major surgery, but a

facelift was indeed welcome; gone are the dated terra cotta tiles of old, replaced by muted dark browns and grass-textured, deep green walls. (The browny-red tiled floor still remains, though, and does stick out a little.)

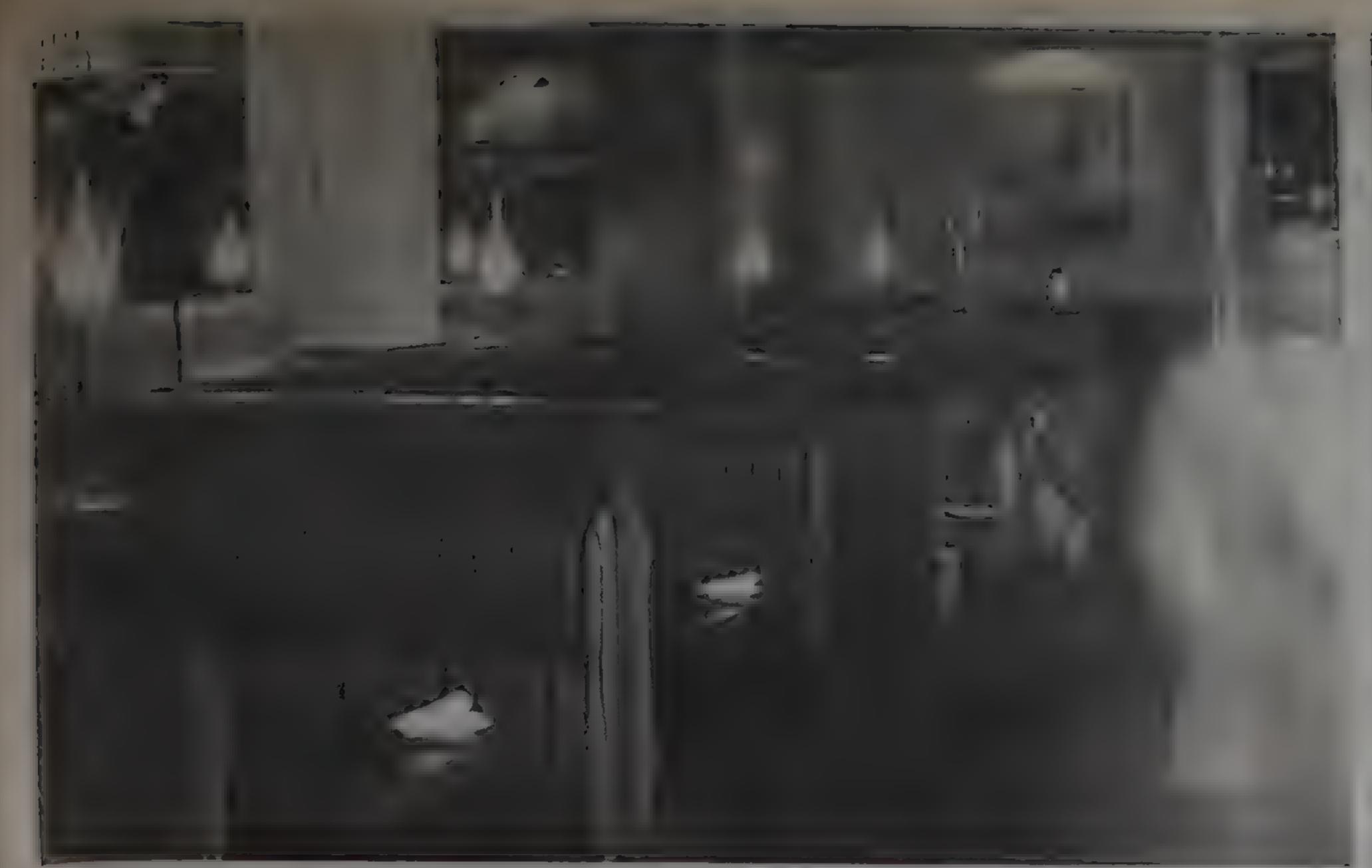
The server arrived, and after perusing Select's ample wine list, we decided to go by the glass rather than-get a bottle. I was in the mood for a big, smooth red, and so chose the Foxwood "Old Bush Vine" Syrah from France at \$7 (although the Moore's Creek Shiraz was indeed tempting), while my girlfriend went with a dry and fruity Chilean Isla Negro Chardonnay (\$6). To eat, we didn't want to put down anything too heavy given the time of night, so we focused our attention on the Lighter Fare section of the menu; I chose the intriguing-sounding combination of Marinated Olives, Manchego Cheese and Chili-Toasted Almonds (\$11), while my girlfriend opted for the Smoked Salmon, served with red onion, capers, cream cheese and Chazzan rye bread (\$13). Having ordered, we settled in to sip our wine and wait.

AND WAIT we most certainly did, for a little more than half an hour, which seemed like an awfully long time considering the quiet hour and that we'd ordered two food items

SEE PAGE 25



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Everybody comes to Ric's

...or at least they ought to, because Ric's Grill sets a new standard for steaky excellence

BY CHRISTOPHER THRALL

as I walked up to the entrance of Ric's Grill downtown, I immediately perceived that this is a place for guys and the people who love them. My first hint was an advertisement out front for a happy hour "Beer Buffet." The second was the décor comprised of manly, denlike exposed brick and dark wood with mosaic glass accents. And the third hint was the staff. Attractive, well-dressed men and demurely clad women stood in diametric opposition to the plastic sexuality of the waitstaff in other restaurants, shifting attention from the Barbie parade and back to the patrons.

The hostess welcomed us as we entered and despite a nearly empty restaurant, she sat us at the booth right next to the door. This meant that we not only got to enjoy the raucous Beer Buffet crowd in the lounge and endless tableside discussions among staff, but we also benefited from a colourful downtown resident's analysis of the upcoming

Ary day is a good day

(PPA) 73)

Batman movie. My wife and I took a deep breath, put the distractions behind us and cracked open our menus. Things immediately started looking up.

I flipped past the first two pages in the cocktail menu—beers—and scanned through their specialty drinks. My wife decided on a Paris Sunrise (making the obligatory reference to Ms. Hilton as she did so), and I couldn't resist any drink called a Miami Ice (both \$4.75). Our server

MANTAI

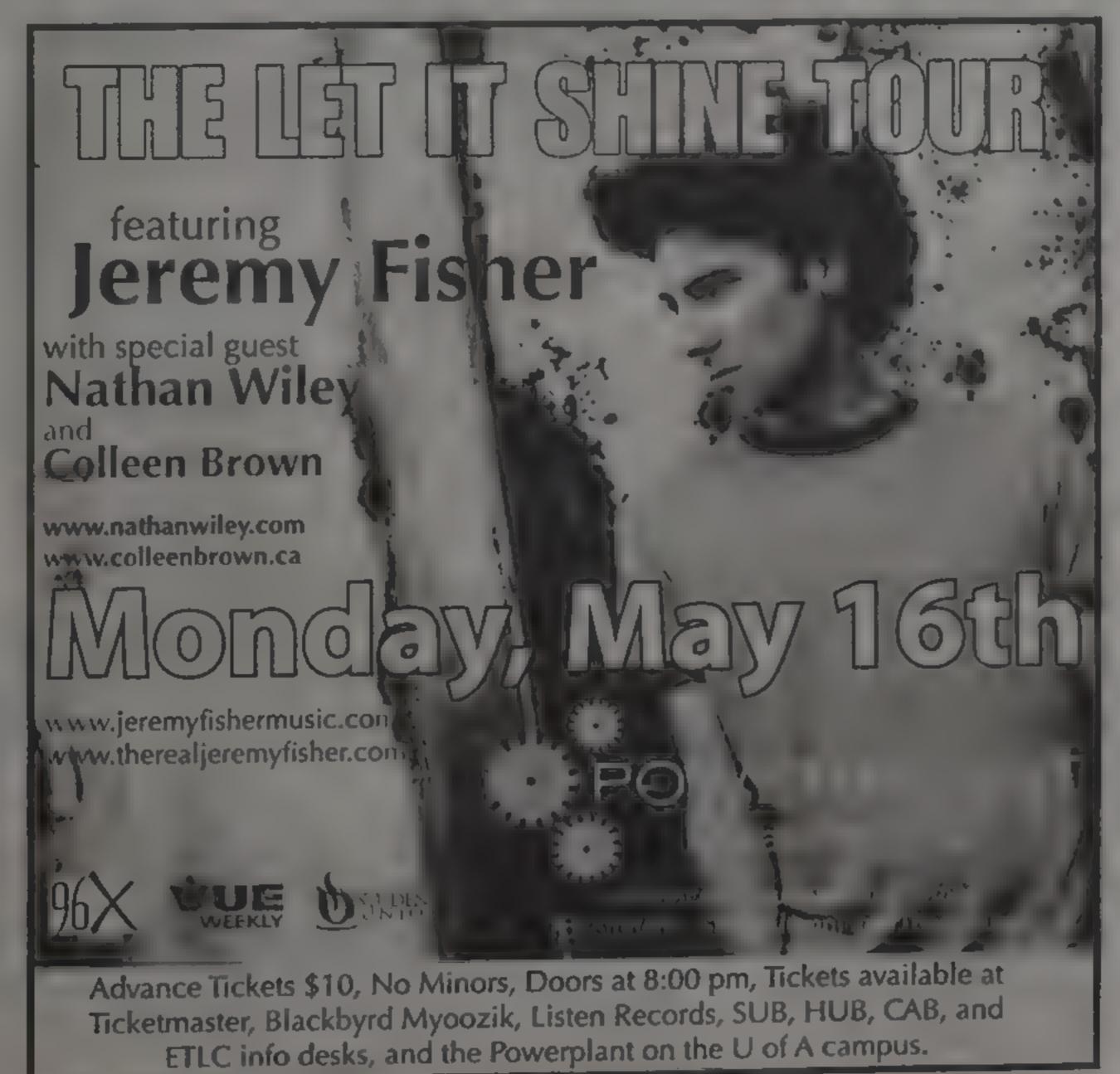
was an outgoing blond whose refreshing enthusiasm for his work and incipient fatherhood punctuated the night.

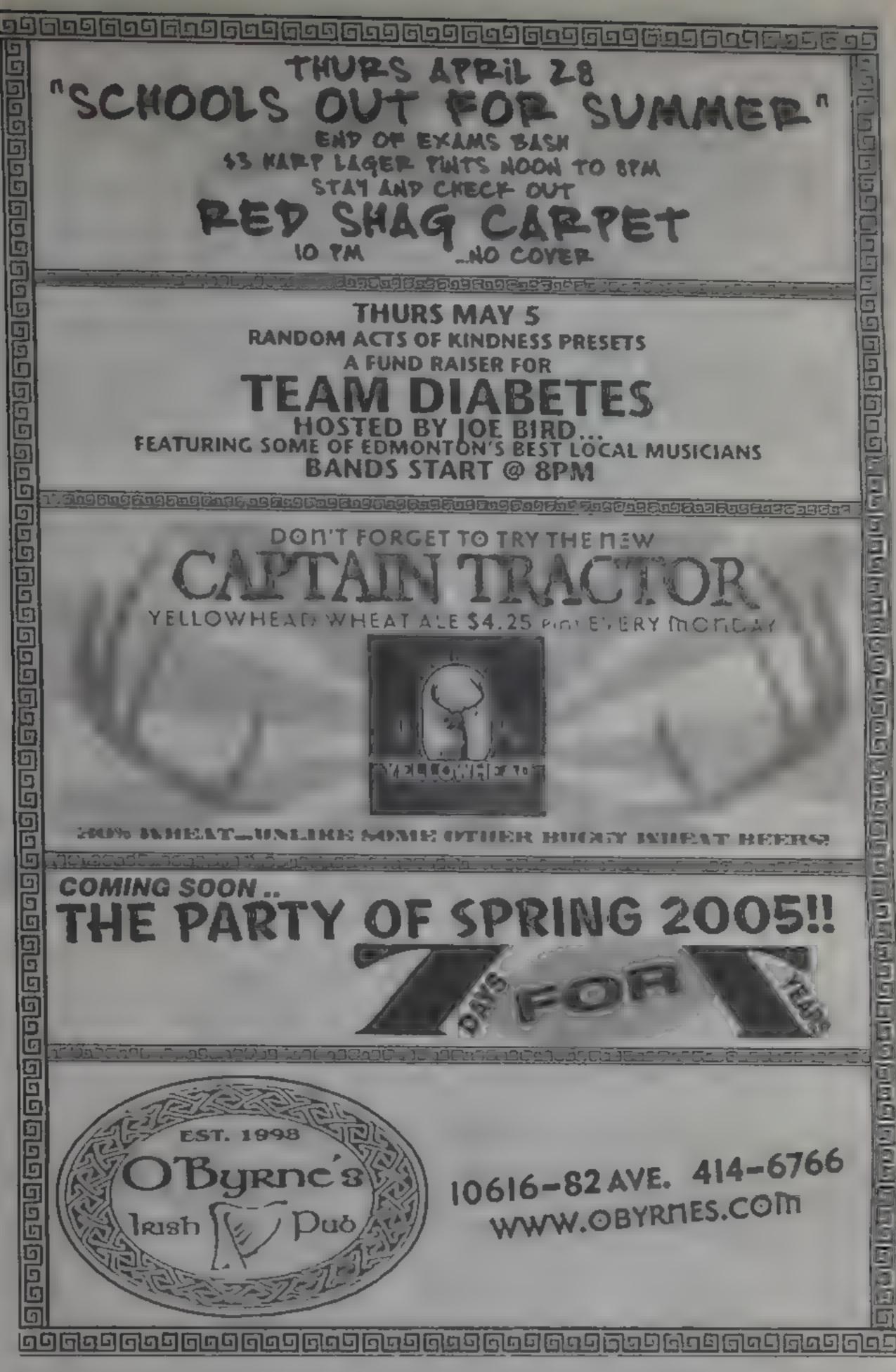
Menu prices were higher than our usual range but not cardiac-

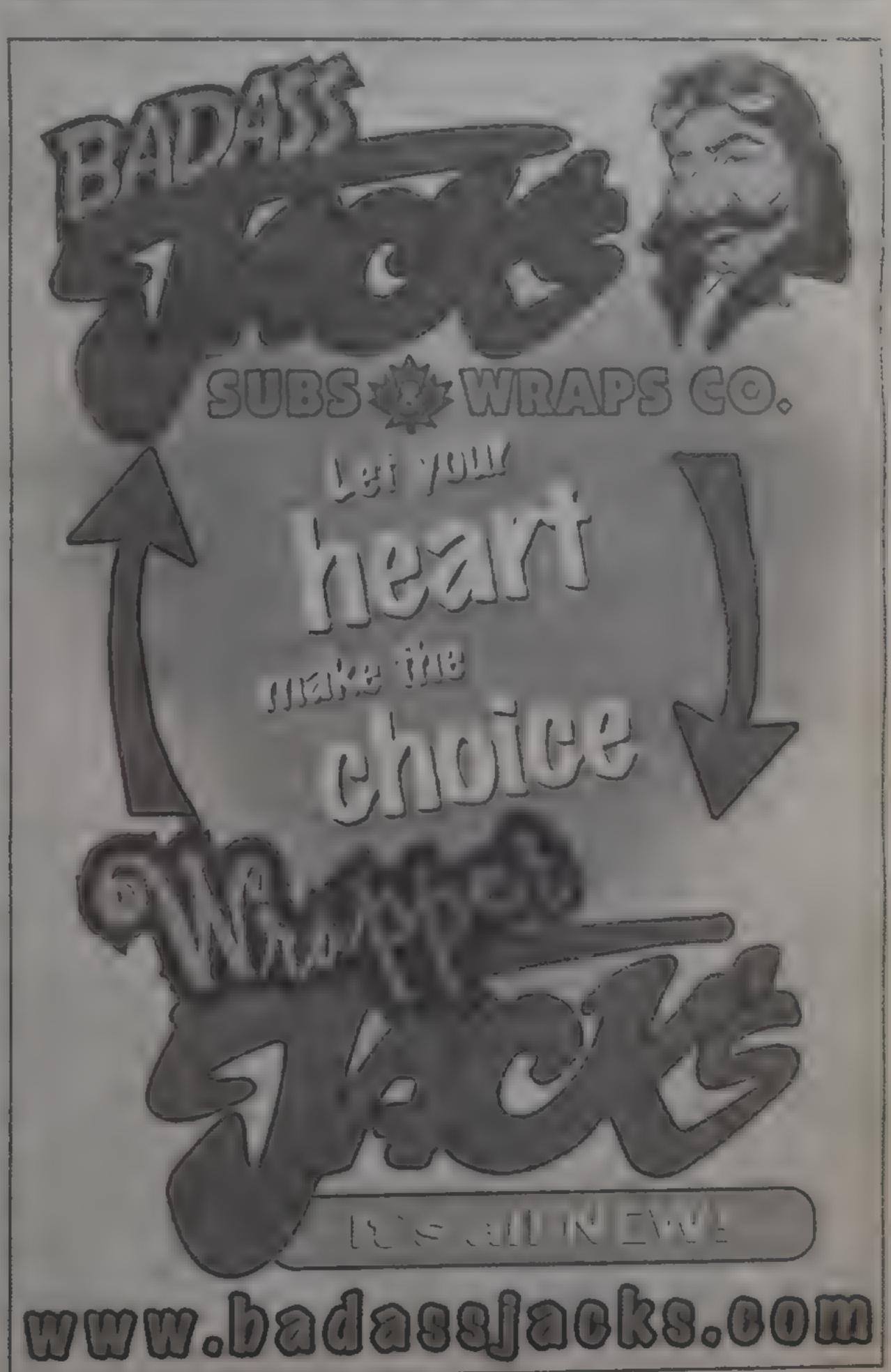
arresting, and the choices were encouraging. My bride selected the pan-seared snapper (\$18) from the lighter fare menu, and from the available accompanying options, she couldn't resist a spinach salad to start and sautéed mushrooms on the side. Despite the tempting seafood options and a duck à l'orange special, I had come to a steakhouse for steak. I chose the 8 oz. marinated prime rib (\$23), slow roasted all day, with their homemade clam chowder and red potatoes in a Dijon cream sauce. We decided against tempting appetizers ranging from \$5 to \$15 in order to save room for dessert.

My Miami Ice was a neon-green adult popsicle, and my wife's cocktail was a Shirley Temple with an

SEE PAGE 25







Let your tastebuds decide!

Maybe its the perogies that practically melted your mouth. Maybe its the samosas that sent your senses into orbit. Maybe its the chocolate creation that lives on in your memory and calls out to you every time you eat out. Edmonton has it all.

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Restaurant Bonanza! Two nights in a condo in Panorama courtesy Plus \$100 in Restaurant gift certificates! Ten others will receive a \$20 or \$25 gift certificate to an Edmonton restaurant. (prizes must be accepted as is)

nest restaurants

- Appetizers____ • Soups_____ • Salads_____
- Breads • Steaks_____ • Venison____
- Sushi_____ • Tapas_____
- Pub Food_____ • Dim Sum
- Sandwiches_____ • Hamburgers_____
- French Fries_____
- Wraps____
- Pizza
- Desserts_____
- Chicken Wings

- Breakfast_____
- Bakery____
- Coffee Shop______
- Tea Shop______
- Deli____
- Bavarian_____
- Greek_____
- French • Italian/Pasta_____
- Chinese____
- Thai
- Japanese_____
- East Indian/Tandoori
- Mexican/Latin American
- Steakhouse_____
- Seafood_____
- Vegetarian
- African_____
- Juice Bar

- Best New Restaurant
- Sweets
- Snacks (pretzels, bagels)
- Pre-theatre dining
- Restaurant for lovers
- Innovative menu_____
- Wine list
- Beer list
- When you only have \$10______
- Best when someone else is paying______
- Late night/all night_______
- Weekend brunch
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This is your official ballot. Send it in!

Walme: Address:

Phone # [daytime]:

Entries must be received no later than 5 pm, May 5 2005 (No duplicate entries, 1 entry per person. Any entries with identical writing to another will be discarded. Mismos et somissi amin'isa 26 su 2001/

Mail answers to:

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> or FAX: 428 2888 or email: fork@yue.ab.ca



Look for this symbol! Any restaurant advertising with this symbol wants to be considered by our readers when they vote for Vue Weekly's Golden Fork Awards to be announced on May 12 2005. The ballot will appear in our April 21 & 28 issues. It asks you to vote for Edmonton's best on our Seventh Annual Reader's Choice Awards for 40 best food catagories.

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Continued from page 22

that basically required no cooking other than a quick toss in the pan for my admonds. And this holdup was only made worse by the fact that our server had earlier found himself increasingly occupied by a table of his friends nearby, leaving us to wait to place our food order while he glided by unaware again and again, thoroughly tunnel-visioned by his acquaintances' drink orders. While our server was indeed pleasant enough and eventually started paying us mind once we were eating, it was nonetheless a frustrating way to start the evening.

And unfortunately, when the food did arrive, it proved to be not worth its beyond-fashionable lateness. While my girlfriend's smoked

salmon, arranged simply on a plate with the onions, capers and lemon hanging out on the side and an accompanying basket of bread, was fine (albeit a little pedestrian, as she reported), I couldn't help but be disappointed by the presentation of my choice. When I ordered the olives, cheese and almonds, I knew I would be getting some amount of all three of those things—but I certainly didn't expect them to be so plainly and unadventurously separated in little white bowls on a bare plate with a meagre offering of toasted bread on the side. I had assumed I would be getting an assortment of these three ingredients arranged on a bed of greens, or with crackers, or anything, really; what I got was an uninspired collection of ingredients. And while the ingredients themselves were nice—the cheese was firm and pungent and the almonds were nicely

toasted, although seemingly devoid of chili-I don't think it's unreasonable to expect more attention to composition and presentation from a restaurant of Select's stature.

When we got the bill, there was one last surprise, as the wines turned out to cost 50 cents more each than what the menu had said they did—a negligible difference, sure, but one that you'd hope would be brought to your attention. All told, the evening came in at just north of \$40 before the tip. Overall, our first experience at the new Select had not been overwhelmingly positive, to say the least, but it's possible that most of my concerns can be chalked up to the establishment being still a little green. We'll see how things go again in a couple of months. O

> CAFÉ SELECT 8404-109 St • 438-1812

Ric's GPIL

Continued from page 23

attitude. As we sipped our drinks, we tried with some success to ignore the foot traffic beside our table. Our server reappeared almost immediately to deliver a warm, sensational Parisian loaf with herb butter, quickly followed by our starters. I could barely sink my spoon into the densely packed bowl of chowder; less creamy than I expected, its vegetable content brought it halfway to borscht and all the way to excellent. Her spinach salad was a hit as well, crisp and fresh with a balsamic tang. Unexpected chunks of orange and artichoke added to the salad's unique presentation. The flavours and quality of our starters heightened our anticipation of the entrées. We were not disappointed.

EVERY SO OFTEN, you sit down to a meal that sets the bar for that food in the years to come. For me, for as long as I can remember, I've measured steaks against the Keg's filet mignon. However, Ric's thick slab of prime rib, served with red potatoes, horseradish and au jus, will be my new standard. My knife was unnecessary, as the tender tissue tore beneath my fork. I have never had meat melt on my tongue like this, and the Dijon cream sauce was a perfect complement to both steak and potato. I wish I had ordered a glass of shiraz.

My wife's snapper was luscious, absorbing flavour from above and below. The topping of fresh fruit salsa and a trickle of white wine butter from the sautéed mushrooms gave that filet a wallop. I didn't bother with more than a taste, however. I was busy performing the absurd act I condemn as an unnecessary delay to culinary pacing: I was actually putting my knife and fork down with each bite. No shit. It was that good.

Our nearly spotless plates were swept away and our server returned with our guide to the gustatory coups de grâce. Each dessert was \$6.50 and sinfully alluring. Against both recommendation and expectation, my wife selected ginger cake over cheesecake. I seized on the cappucci-

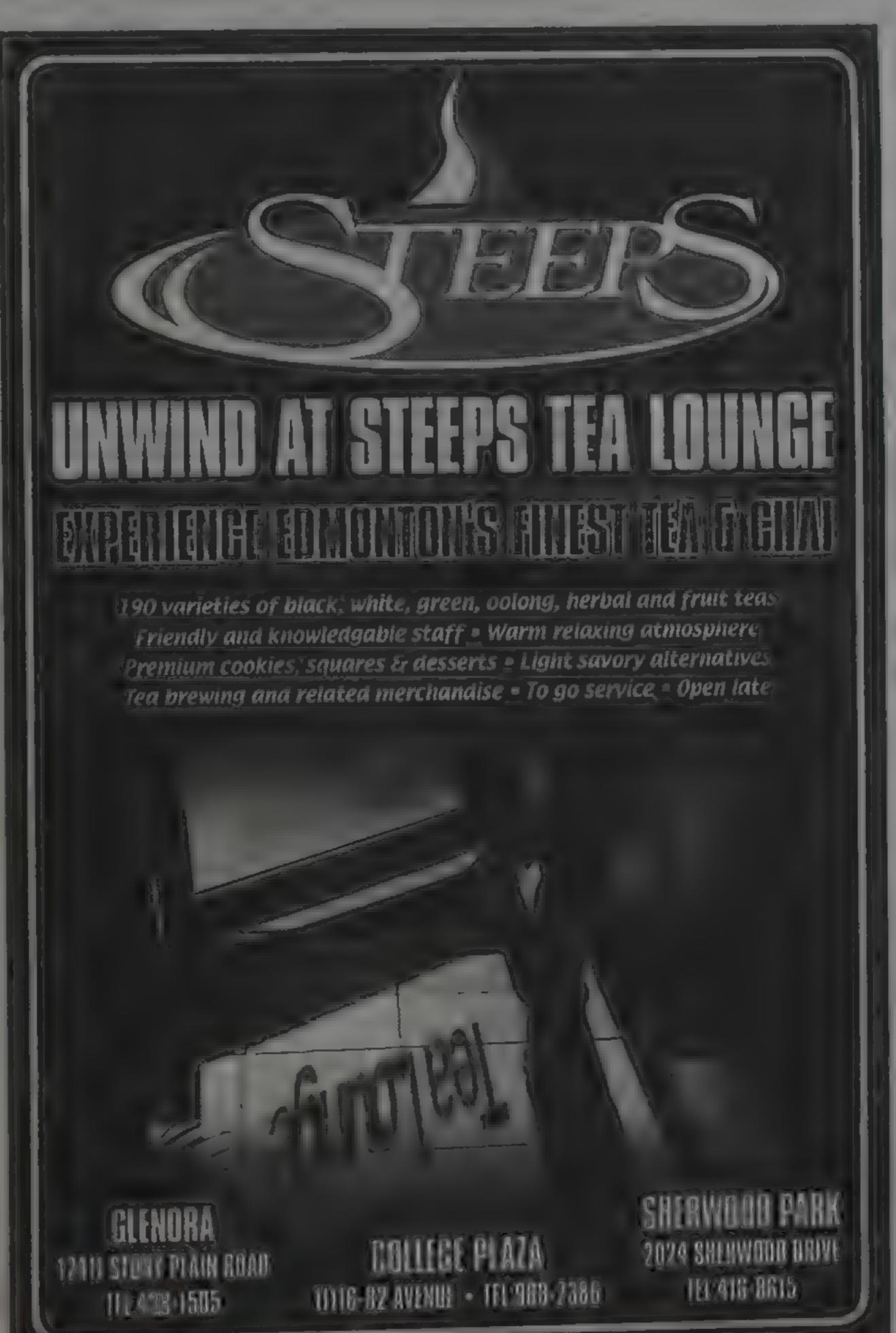
no pie and requested coffee (\$2.50) for both of us.

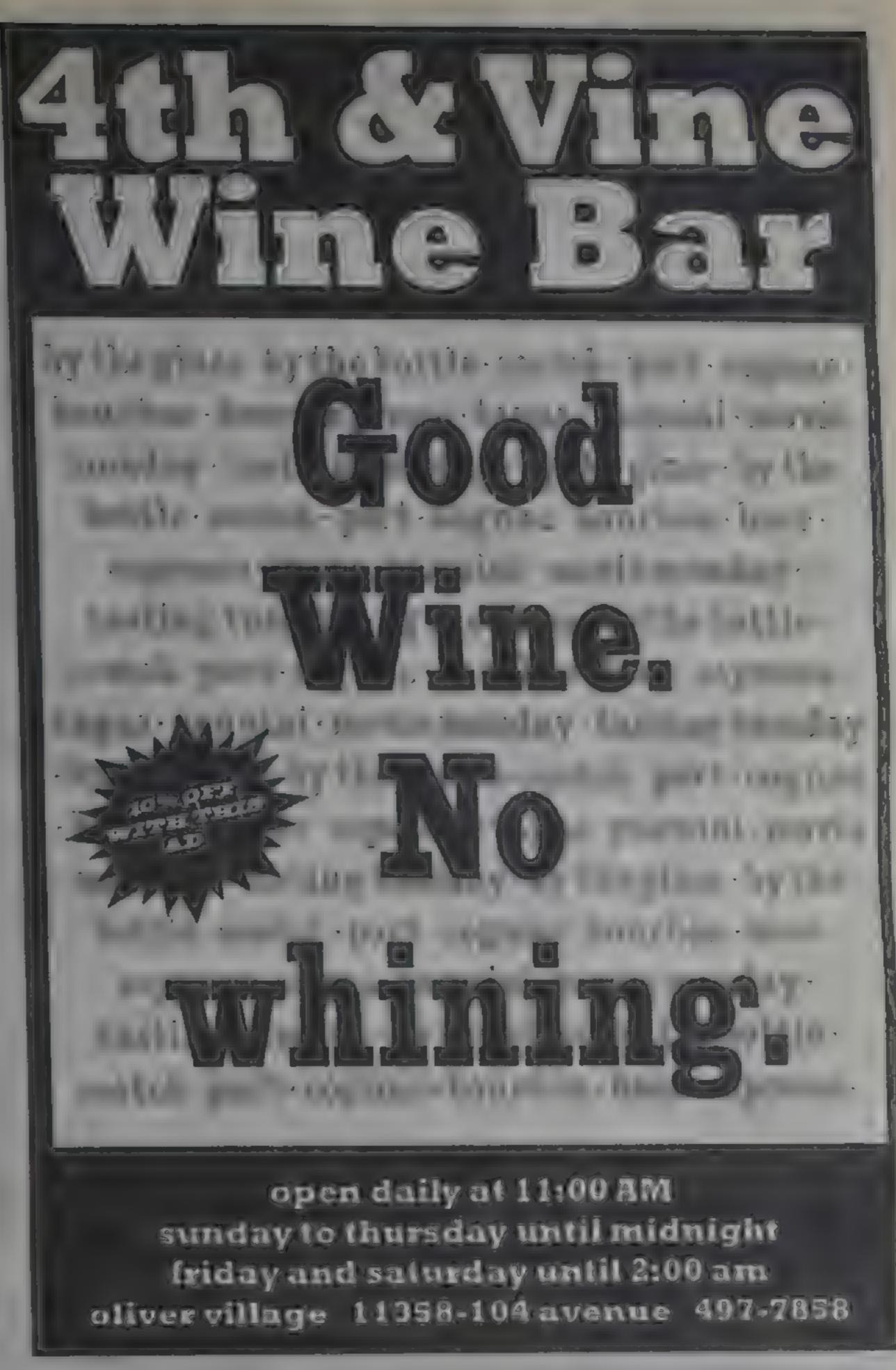
The final chapter of our meal set our heads spinning. The dark roast coffee was tasty, but those desserts.... Hers was like a warm, moist gingerbread cookie blown up to four times its normal thickness, set beside a scoop of vanilla ice cream and drizzled with caramel. My cappuccino pie should have been a controlled substance. I have never had anything as addictive as this rich cappuccino ice cream atop chocolate crust, chocolate bits swirled within, a dollop of whipped cream to the side and drizzled with both caramel and hot

fudge. (Granted, I've never tried heroin, but still.)

We were so dazzled by dessert that we were staggering out the door by the time I processed that dinner, drinks, tax and (generous) tip had set us back \$90. Seeing as I'm not a well-off player in my early 40s, I probably won't be rushing back for the ambiance, and if I did I would definitely request a different table. But Ric, you can charge me that much for a feast like that any time. O

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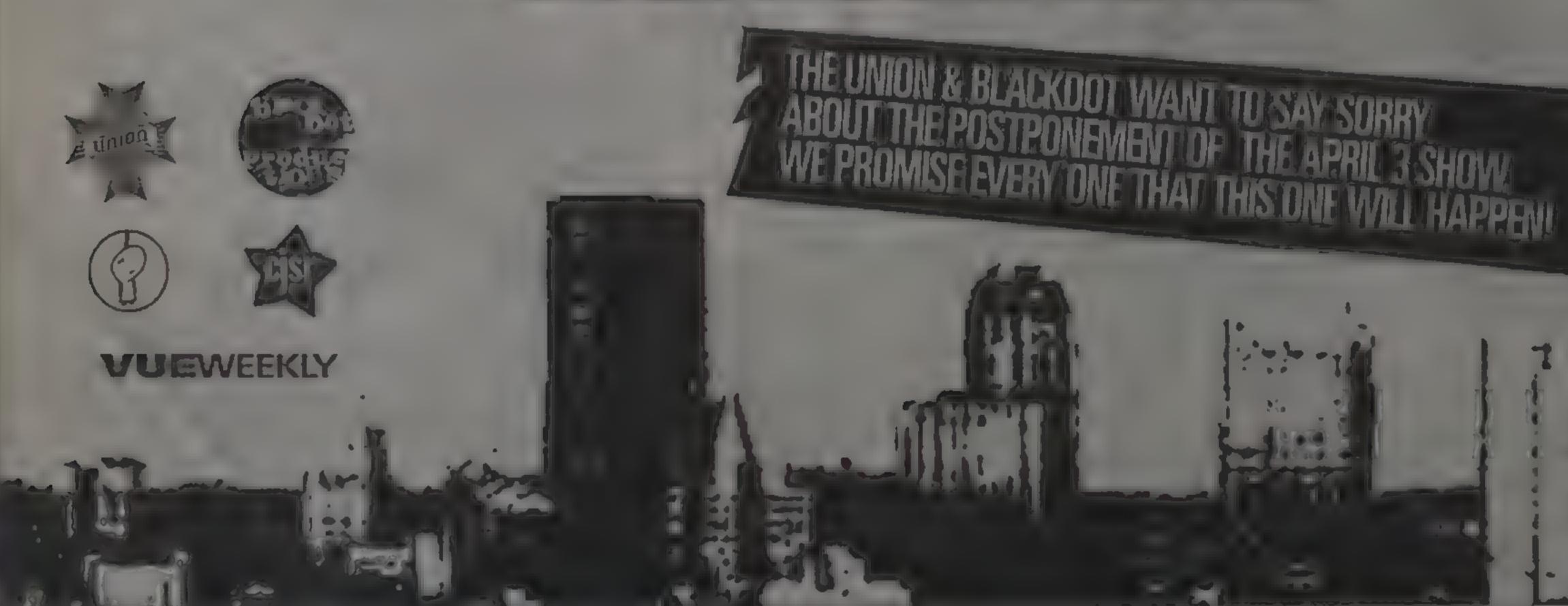


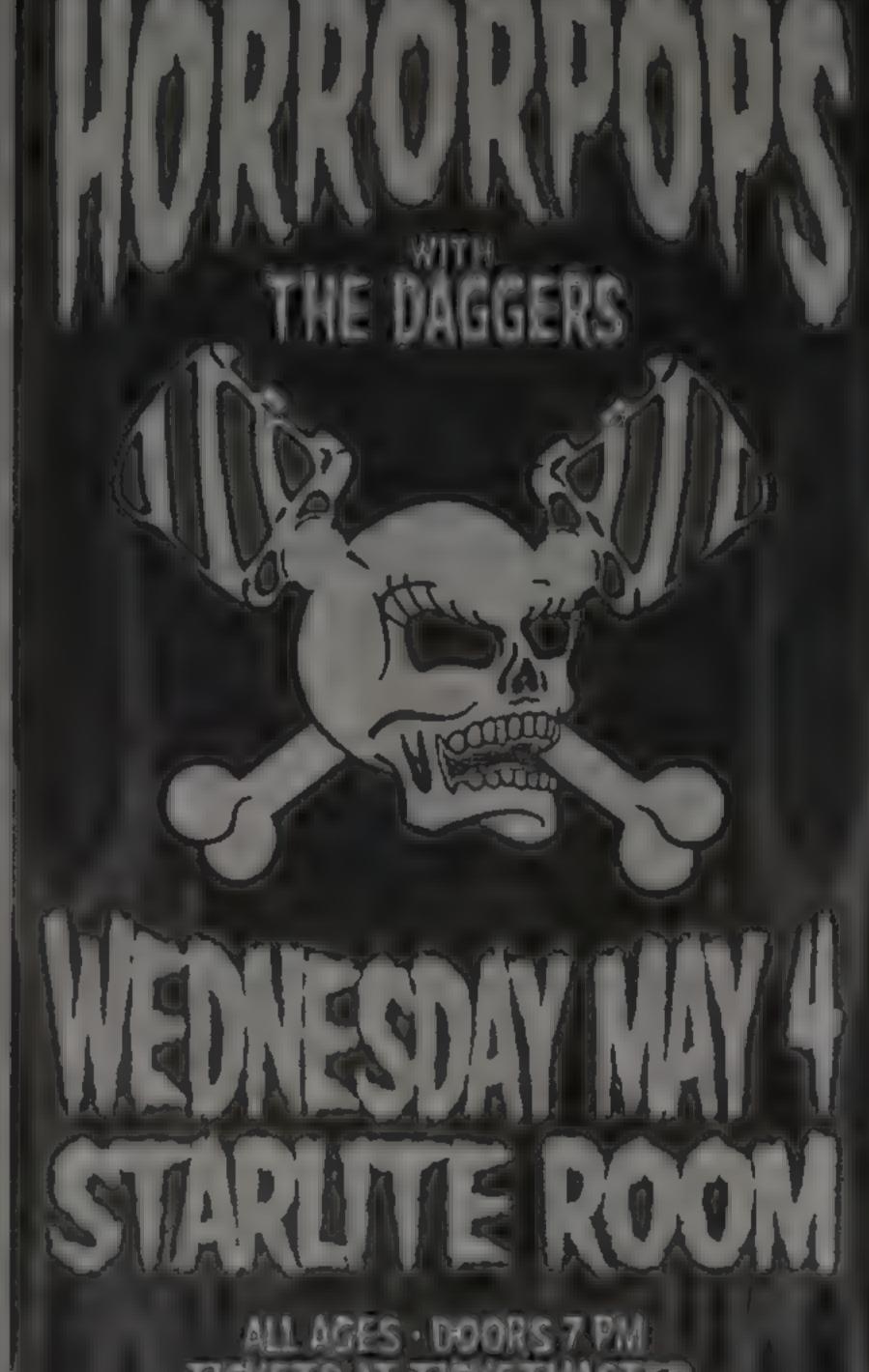
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Everything old is canced again

A novice paddler tackles the North Saskatchewan River and endures the snickering of her wilderness guide friend

BY CHRISTIE SCHULTZ

"ve been told that it's not wise to plant tomatoes or other delicate things before the May long weekend. I think that the same advice might apply to those who would plant neophyte paddlers in a canoe for the very first time.

Last May long weekend, I embarked upon my first canoeing adventure. Sure, it would have made sense to head to a nice calm lake, set up a tent near a car and paddle around for a few hours and call that an introduction to canoeing. It

would make sense for my first river trip to be from Devon to Edmonton. But sensible is rarely my path. Even my first camping experience only two years ago involved a big pack

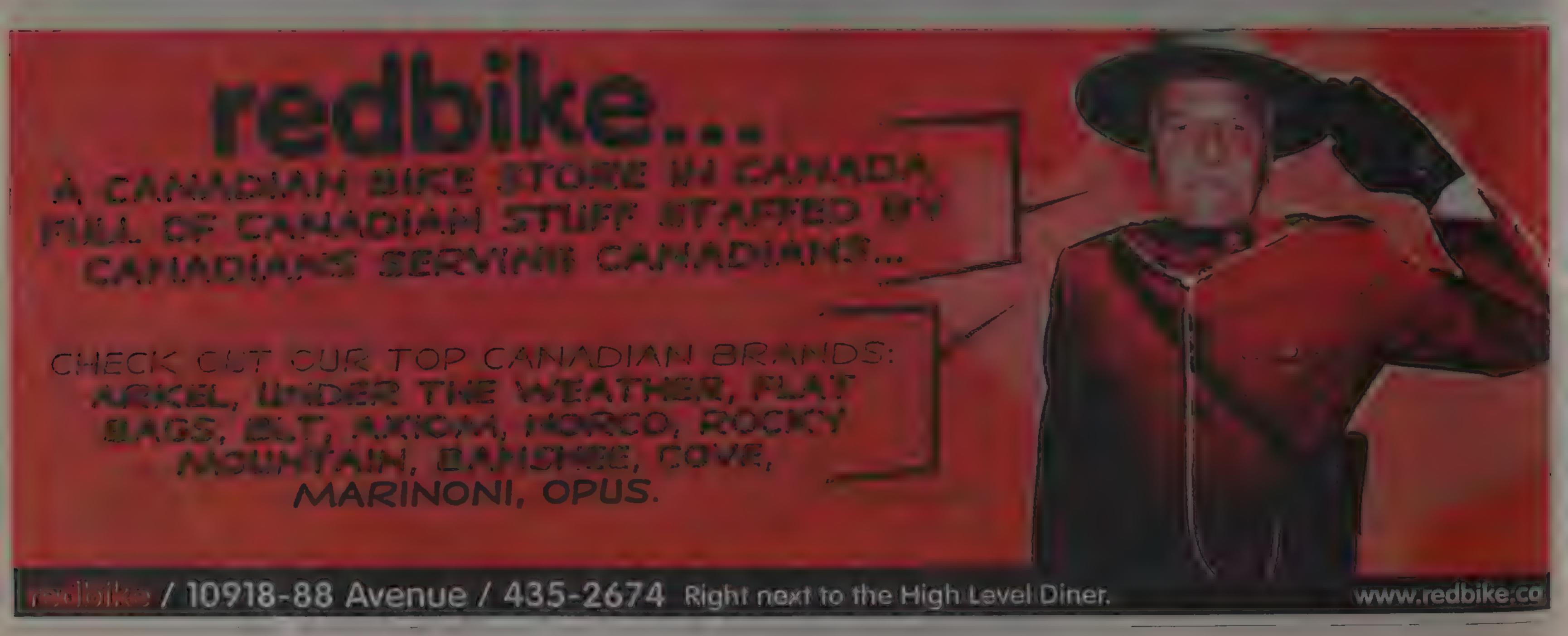
strapped to my back and a four-hour hike to the "campsite" in the mountains. And so when my friend Margo, who has spent part of her life as a wilderness guide, planned a canoe

trip down the North Saskatchewan River from Nordegg to Rocky Mountain House for my partner, herself and me, I couldn't wait to get going.

With two canoes strapped to our two cars, the three of us headed out in the direction of Nordegg. Of course, it was May long weekend, so when the blizzard just east of Nordegg made driving impossible, we shouldn't have been surprised. Not hiding my fear of freezing to death very well, I helped set up our tents at Saunders Launch and prepared to

start paddling the next day. And so, the highlight of the first day of my very first canoeing trip was the eightinch icicles that decorated our cooktarp as we shivered in time to the sound of what became an icy rain.

By morning, the sun was shining, if only to confuse our frosty first steps. But once we had finished breakfast, including makeshift drip coffee, it was bright and warm enough to trust that we would need sunscreen along with the fleece. At this point, I had never been in a





canoe. I had never even touched a paddle. I didn't know my bow from my stern or a pry from a draw. This didn't scare me. It might have scared my companions. "You mean you've never been in a canoe?" Margo asked incredulously. "Not even in a lake?"

Nevertheless, my partner and I were soon in a tandem boat paddling down a river-not falling into it-and leaving the snow and winter behind: Of course, a river canoe trip differs markedly from a more sensible lake trip. For one thing, rivers move. This can be helpful because if you don't feel like working very hard, the river will, technically, carry you along for a while. All you need to do is influence the direction of your canoesomething which, I might add, is rather important to do.

However, rivers can also move very fast. Rapidly, even. And despite the pains Margo took to demonstrate the pry, the draw and the power

stroke to me, no one counted on my natural tendency to lift my paddle out of the water and yell "Eek!" whenever I encountered rapids. The only reason I didn't meet the river's bottom upon encountering the whitewater the first time was that my "Eek!" was overruled by a slightly more urgent command to Paddle!" coming from the stern. And so I paddled.

I would like offer a helpful piece of advice to novice river canoe paddlers: if you encounter rapids, paddle very fast and very hard. The harder and faster you paddle, the less likely it is that you will get very wet. By the way, waterproof pants are especially nice to wear for paddling on cool days.

OUR SECOND NIGHT did not include snow. Indeed, the "site," located somewhere in the middle of what seemed like nowhere, included very little to remind us of the night before

or any previous night in my life. If you've never camped on the side of a river at a "site" designated only by like-minded travelers who've come before, I must recommend it. There's evidence of human life, but only barely. The people who travel this way leave only footprints, and they usually prefer to leave even less than that. There are no outhouses. There are no signs telling you "you are here." It's wonderful. And this recommendation comes from a confirmed city-girl whose mental image of camping used to include, at the very least, a shower facility. And perhaps a nice cabin with a stove. And a bed.

The third day saw us stripping down to T-shirts by noon. This is the nature of the May long weekend, I suppose: hypothermic shivering coexisting with sunburned knees. (If you wear shorts while paddling in a canoe, put sunscreen on your knees!)

By this point, I also thought that I had mastered the basics of paddling. After all, I was paddling through the rapids and I was beginning to think that I looked pretty cool out there. At precisely that moment, however, we caught an eddy and demonstrated our amazing ability to spin around a bit and run into some nice shallow pebbles. Margo was busy pretending not to laugh at us when she noticed a group of Boy Scouts who had stopped for some lunch and were resting on the shore. Judging from their laughter, they obviously knew how to maneuver their canoes as well. Newly humbled, we listened to Margo as she taught us what I'm told is a very cool trick; sideferrying across the river. Of course, we were giggling so much that it turned into an extremely advanced move.

A BRIDGE in Rocky Mountain House, one used by most paddlers who end their journey there, marked the end of our trip. Even now, I find it striking that such a commonplace sight, crossed by hundreds of cars every day, can seem suddenly so significant. Others were gathered there too, waiting for family and friends. It was nice to share our return to the city with others who had shared the river.

My evaluation of the weekend was probably improved by the nap in the sun I enjoyed while I waited for my fellow paddlers to shuttle the cars. (Novice paddlers, I recommend volunteering to watch the equipment while your friends drive back and forth.) But there's definitely something peaceful and exhilarating about paddling a canoe on a river for a few days—I think I'll be going back for more very soon. My partner and I even received canoe paddles for Christmas. Now all we need is a canoe, a weekend and a river. O



walk unspoiled

The heady elevation at Sun Peaks course only improves the whole golfing experience

BY STEWART DUNCAN

of there's a list somewhere of the 11,001 essential ingredients of a I good game of golf, patience is probably somewhere on it. Golfers in the Kamloops area of south-central B.C. have to have patience not just for the game itself, but for all the games they haven't yet been able to play because two long-awaited courses didn't open when expected. A heavily hyped mega-resort on the former Six Mile Ranch overlooking Kamloops Lake was to have 36 holes of championship golf. A decade later, it still hasn't turned any teebox sod, still doesn't have a hotel deal and still offers little more than Grade A alfalfa hay. So if you come across a map of golf courses in the Thompson Region that says Kamloops on the Lake is "Coming Soon!" or "Opening in 2003!" rest assured it's doing neither. Imagine the patience of the developer who's still working at it. The good news is that there is still an abundance of excellent nine- and 18-hole courses here in south-central B.C.

And that abundance means more golfer-friendly green fees and teetimes. More good news is that after

years of postponement, Sun Peaks Resort's back nine finally opens from mid- to late summer. The front nine, which opened in August 1995, reopens Friday, May 13. (Ooooh, Friday the 13th—you might not want to play that day.) Two factors held up completion of the second half, besides nature's ponderous pace and the short growing season that comes with a mountain climate.

"We've still got two feet of snow on the course," said head pro Bob Duncan on April 18. "That's just the way it is 4,000 feet up in the mountains. We're a ski hill first, but we've got great golf—just a short season. The back nine needs a little more time to mature, so our target date is July 1." There was an additional delay in late summer of 2003 when Sun Peaks had to deal with tremendous wildfires, but the recreational area was ultimately spared.

More significant has been the burning real estate market. With demand for on-mountain housing climbing year after year, the resort has had to develop more runs and install more lifts to provide home buyers with ski-in, ski-out privileges. Priorities were redirected from finishing the 18-hole golf course to developing Mt. Morrisey as the resort's third ski hill. Demand shot up for ski-in/out winter housing that would double as summer housing along the proposed fairways. But the latter half of the course couldn't be done until all the housing was in place. Ergo, the wait. Barring an abysmal summer, we all graduate from patience



school this July or August.

THOSE OF US who've enjoyed the privilege of playing the front nine know that it's a beautiful, exciting and challenging course. Narrow fairways wind through a valley along McGillivray Creek and wrap around

the bases of the three, thickly forested mountains sculpted by ski runs. "The front nine is target golf—short and demanding," Duncan says. "The back nine is much more resort style, more generous fairways and landing areas, tighter greens-friendly, but with bunkers. The greens are a little bigger than the front nine and have more shape. Each one has four distinct pin placements."

Golf Course was designed by Graham Cooke, one of Canada's foremost course architects; the alpine

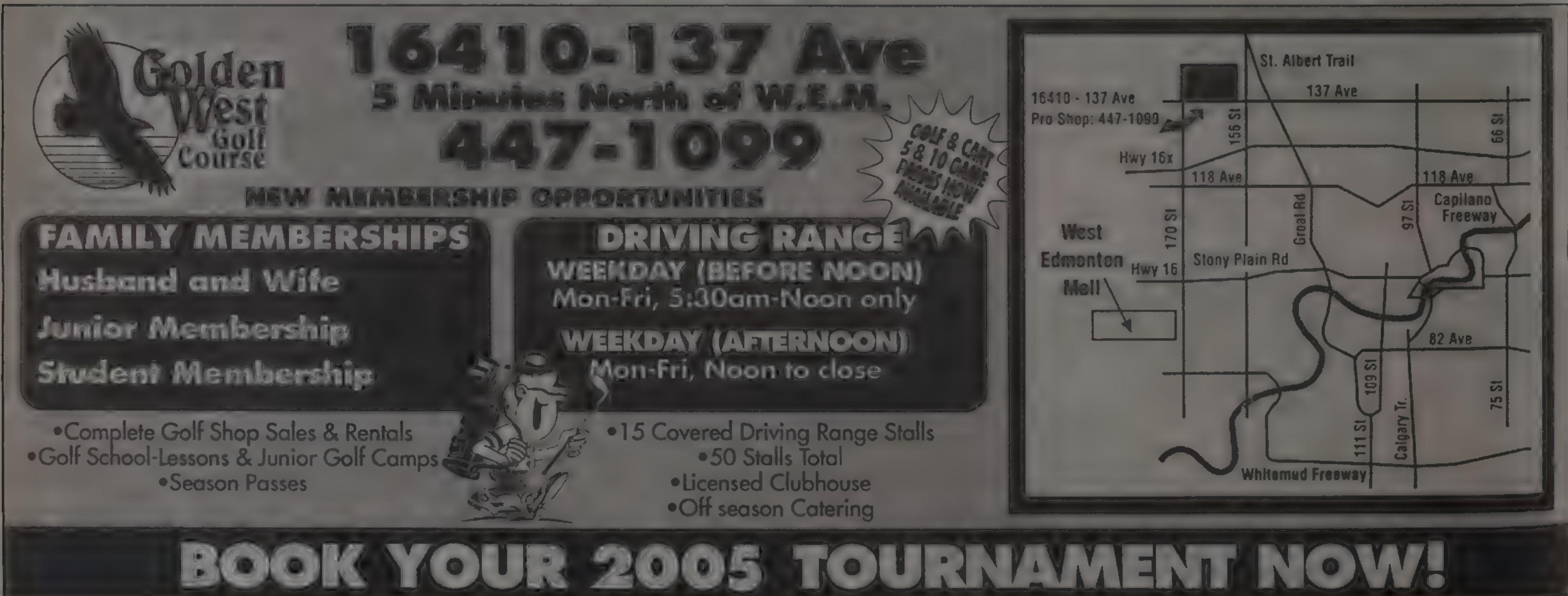
mountain views, colourful wildflowers, the deep greens of a conifer forest of spruce and pine and postcard scenery around every corner. Mark Twain once called golf "a good walk spoiled," but he might have reconsidered if he could have seen this terrain. The creek and the bridges make the trails most pleasant, but you'll enjoy them less if you waste your time looking for wayward orbs. Unless you're really good, forget distance—it's not a long course anyway. The fast-moving creek doesn't give back balls and the dense forest, lush undergrowth and rough terrain will make you long for the wide-open prairie. But if you submit to the environment, it will cleanse your body and spirit.

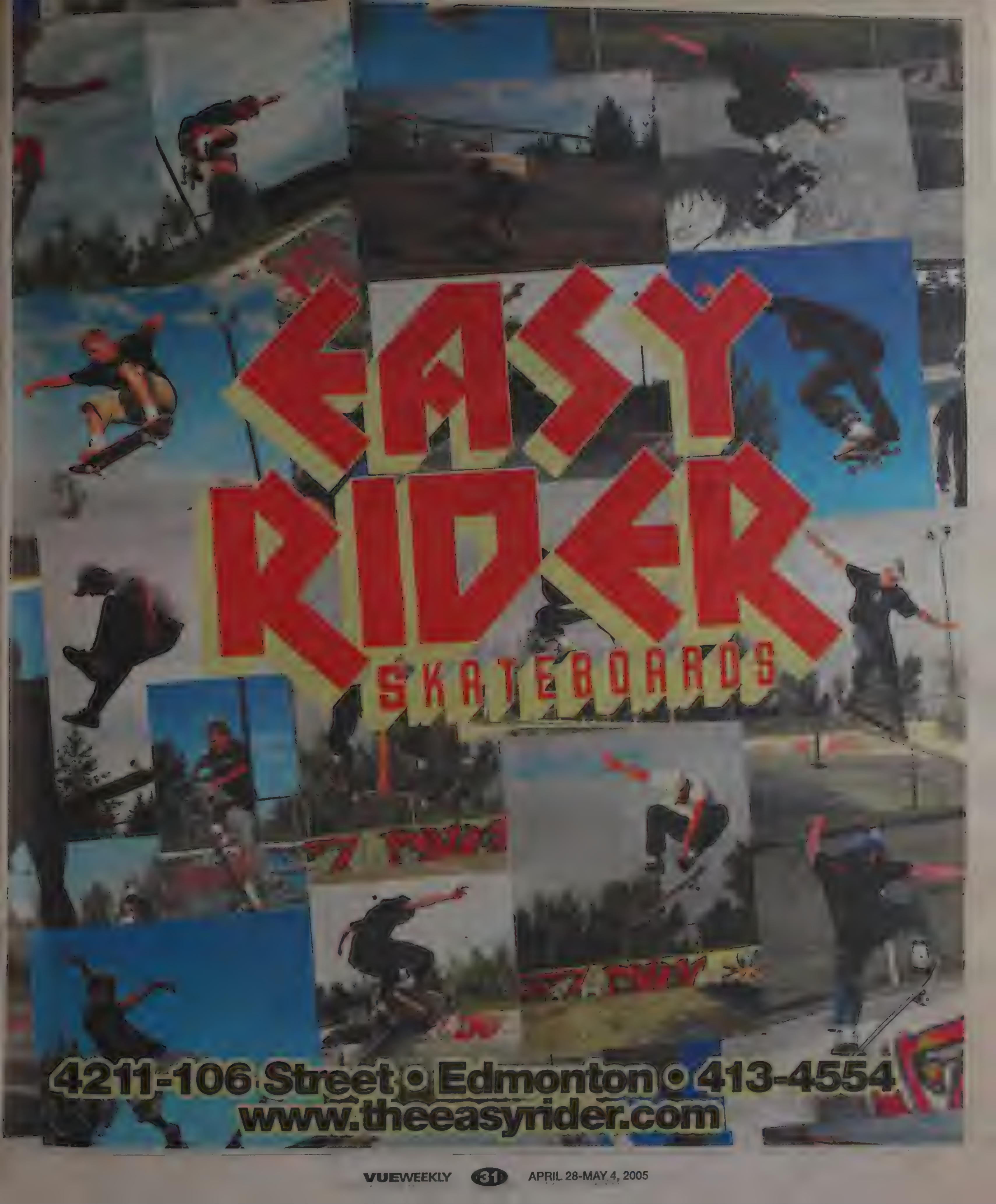
THE FRESH MOUNTAIN AIR IS A WELL

change suddenly and dramatically. Think of it as a touch of home—sudden, extreme weather shifts that may last only several minutes but could last longer. It's a four-hour game, so don't be caught off-guard.

Power carts are available from the fully stocked pro shop; they're not mandatory and there aren't a lot of hills to climb so hoofing it is a reasonable option if you're into that You'll also see and hear a lot more on foot-even on hot days, you may encounter a few magical traces of winter. In fact, the last time I played there, my partner and I were confused when each of our balls landed out of sight and caused those colourful flashes of sparkling light. It turns out that our shots had landed in a mound of snow, kicking the crystals into the sunlight. The multicoloured prism effect gave us a half-second glimpse of light in flight, a merging of science and art in motion. You might not see your own miniature aurora borealis, but you'll sure enjoy your walk. O

come relief from the heat of the The soon-to-be par-72 Sun Peaks Thompson Valley on a summer's day. Just don't forget you're in the mountains. Even on a hot day, you'd be wise to bring a jacket along with your bottled water. Mountain weather can setting is enriched by spectacular





dan't fail me now

Competitive shooting is alive and well in Alberta—but it faces an uncertain future

BY ADAM SMITH

ncome from a smaller town in southern Alberta, where guns are a dime a dozen; the situation here in northern Alberta is much the same. And while I have shot guns on several occasions, it was on a very occasional and purely functional level: shooting gophers, protecting the crops. And maybe placing the animals on the hood of someone's sister's car, or in some sinister, mid- or late-pubescent rage, recklessly lining up old wooden floor-model televisions and burying some buckshot down the tubes. That's what most people, especially the urbanized masses, think of when they think of guns (and of shootin' in general). That, and violence. And lockin' and loadin', and shootin' from the hip, and of Hollywood shoot-'em-ups, or ruthless gangstas, or Dick Tracy.

But really, that isn't what it is supposed to be about, and that's certainly not what it's about for the thousands of Canadians involved recreationally and or competitively in trap and skeet shooting—the their coaches, parents and supporters who devote large portions of their lives and energies into the shooting sports.

That dedication though is no testament to a past of non-violent sport shooting. The name of the clay discs that are targeted in most shooting games are called birds or clay pigeons, a name that comes from the bygone practice of shooting live pigeons that were trapped in cages and released for a waiting shooter. From this questionable background arose trap, skeet and the array of other recreational shooting games.

Inspired by a friend involved in recreational trap shooting, I and my associate Lucas Hale, of Drunken Duncan, took a trip south of E-town to a farmer's field, where we relaxed in the spring sun, downed some fresh bevvies and sent the clay pigeons back to the earth they came from. In what we thought was pure redneckin', we found ourselves really enjoying the sport of shooting. Shootin' isn't about killin' anymore! And it's not about war, or some simulated version of it. In fact, according to the National Skeet Shooting Association, it's about body, mind and soul. And when you delve into the wealth of literature that surrounds the topic, much of it is more reminiscent of Zen Buddhism or other spiritual disciplines emphasizing mental clarity than it is about anything destructive. And I just thought we were going to drink some buds and shoot some guns.

My interest in the sport developed to the point where I contacted

the Northern Alberta Shooting Association, or NASA (!) and was invited by member Dr. Lance Grainger to come down and shoot some trap

SKEET IS A SIMPLE yet deceptively challenging game. Two clay birds are launched from either side of the half-oval shooting area. Shooters attempt to lay down the birds as

and skeet at their world-class facility.

they fly in opposite directions in a relatively predictable pattern. At the same time, the shooter moves between eight shooting posts along the half-oval. In skeet, 24 birds are fired, followed by an extra bird from the centre for a perfect score of 25 points. (Trap shooting is a similar game, but the targets are launched away from the shooter instead of across the shooting field.) The skill both sports demand is considerable.

games since their modern inception.

Shooting on one's own (or with a group of irresponsible friends) can also be fun. A shotgun or two and a few cheap plastic skeet tossers are all that's required to get the game off the ground. When going for your shoot, make sure to get permission from a landowner before commencing the game. Many farmers with open fields don't have a problem with people shooting the biodegradable clay pigeons on their property as long as the visitors clean up any used shells or waste. Never consume alcohol or narcotics before or during shooting.

The sanctioned, institutionally regulated and respectable sport of shooting can be costly; but a rental shotgun, ammunition and a day's range fees costs less than \$50-and some of the dedicated NASA members will surely be willing to give you some tips. You will need to have your FAC (Firearms Certification) or be in the company of someone who does.

Unfortunately, NASA has recently encountered some tough times as Edmonton city council has decided to act on a clause in their lease agreement with the club, and will be terminating the lease in July 2007. The city has plans to decontaminate the lead-infused ground and build an outdoor recreation facility. This is a major gut shot to the small but dedicated group that has safeguarded the legacy of the range since its assembly in 1976 for the 1978 Commonwealth Games.

City council is clearly acting with good intentions, but the lack of planning in regards to the replacement of the facility have left the 100-odd members of the Strathcona Range feeling disgruntled and betrayed. The group's malady is only exacerbated by the fact that with the termination of their lease, they will be unable to host a variety of international events, including the 2005 World Masters Games, as revenue must be rerouted to securing a new







France me outside

Hardy Canadians are well-conditioned to enjoy southern France during the off-season

BY MARILYN LETTS

In March and April, I wonder why I live in Alberta. During the "off-season" in Alberta, biking skids out on gravel, hiking gets bogged down in mud and skiing trickles to a mushy finish. However, there are advantages to being an Albertan, as my family and I discovered when we visited France this spring. During the "off-season" in southern France, the Roman ruins and walking trails are still there, but with a few thousand fewer tourists and better hotel prices.

We wanted to hit the historical highlights, but our trip was also an escape from the brown and grey time we call spring in Alberta. Surely France would be a little more colorful than home. But we didn't imagine one of the highlights of the trip would be an afternoon at the beach.

We arrived in Carcassonne, a medieval fortified town in southwestern France, on Easter Monday. The grass was green, the cherry blossoms were out and flowers filled the beds outside the train station. At 18° it felt like summer to us. We asked the young woman at tourist information about a hotel with a pool. She raised her eyebrows.

"A pool to swim in?" She clearly thought our English was lacking.

"Oui, a swimming pool."

"It is too cold!" It was right about then that I noticed she was wearing a winter coat with the zipper done up to her neck.

We had read about one hotel

with a year-round pool, so we persisted and she got us a room. The next day after exploring the medieval walled city for a few hours, we took a break and went back to the hotel for a swim. The staff uncovered the pool for us, although they plainly thought we were crazy. "We're from Canada," we offered by way an explanation before spending the afternoon happily chasing each other around our own private pool. The desk clerk asked us to let her know when we were done swimming so someone could cover the pool immediately to preserve the heat. I had a feeling they would really be blown away by the hot springs in Banff.

FROM CARCASSONNE, we drove along the coast heading to Arles. Just after a town called Agde on the way to Sète we got our first glimpse of the Mediterranean. Eight kilometres of sandy beach stretches between the two towns and we decided to stop and check it out. Judging by the number of parking lots, the crowds must be dense in the summertime. We were able to park right next to the beach on the highway and all four of us ran to touch the water.

Our kids swim in the Kananaskis River. They have swum in the Pacific Ocean off Vancouver Island. In comparison, the Mediterranean did not feel bad. Scattered clouds filled the sky and the temperature was about 15°-no worse than a cool summer day at Sylvan Lake. A few other cars were parked next to the beach, but people seemed content to sit and watch the waves. Nobody was in the water. Our kids rolled up their pants and had their shoes and socks off immediately. In no time, they were building walls and waterways in the sand. I left their dad supervising construction while I went for a walk.



I discovered that the few people on the beach were collecting shells; all colours, sizes and varieties covered the beach. Perhaps there were more than usual because the summer crowds hadn't picked them over. Or maybe some places in the world just have treasures like that

OVERSEAS

lying around all the time.

If we had known ahead of time how beautiful this stretch was I think we would have planned to stay longer. However, our time was limited because I was in desperate need of a bathroom, which are scarce in France. So we said goodbye to the beach and dusted the sand off our feet.

We finally found a bathroom at a truckstop in Sète. (I'll spare you the details of the bladder-bursting song we made up on the way. Or the time we spent lost on a long narrow street that turned into a dead end.) After that welcome stop, we continued along the coast to find a place to pic-

nic. Luck was with us and we stopped at a beach in Frontignan, the next town.

Windsurfers and what I've since found out were kite-surfers or kiteboarders dotted the water with colour. We parked so we could watch and lunched in the car because of the wind. I suspect the wind is a crucial component of kite-surfing, which looked like a combination of parasailing and surfing. One guy with a bright red kite performed flips easily 20 feet in the air. He made it look effortless, but the film crew accompanying him indicated that he wasn't just an average participant. An awful lot of other people out on the water were not making any aerial moves. It looked more like they were trying desperately to control a kite in gale-force winds that threatened to lift them up and carry them off into the countryside.

close to shore, you could see they were wearing "dry-suits," the kind of suit you can wear in arctic waters and still survive because it keeps all

the water out. They must have considered these winter conditions.

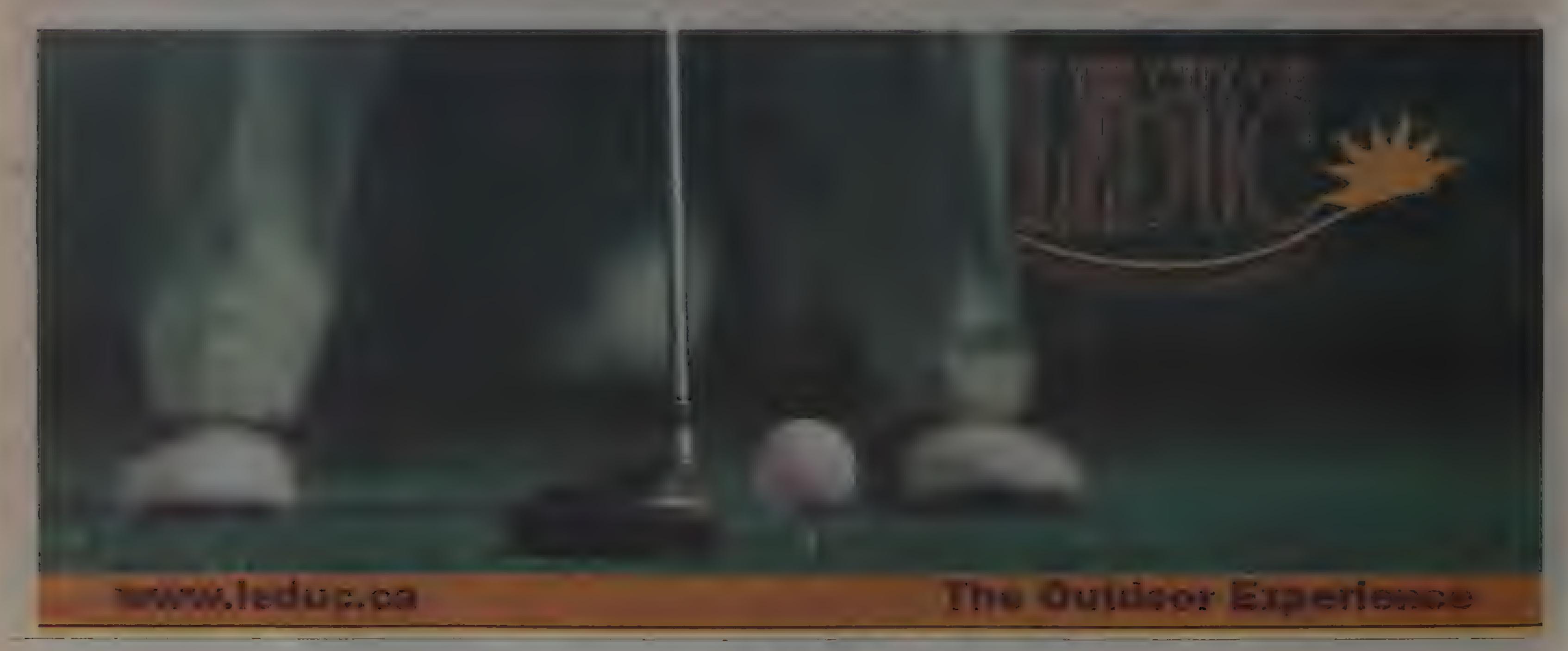
After we oohed and aahed at the one kite-surfing performer for a while, I asked the kids if they would like to try it.

"Are you nuts?"

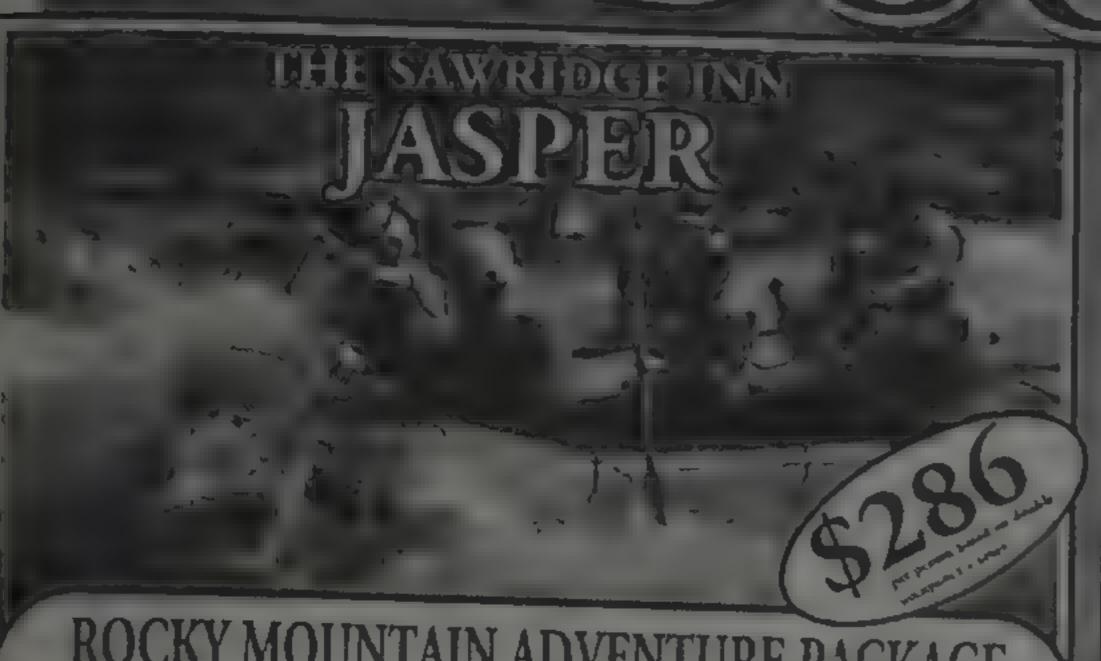
"You'd have to be crazy to be dragged around by a kite in this wind. And then you have to figure out the board thing with your feet."

Since none of us were interested in trying something that looked so suicidal, we continued on our journev.

Next time you're looking for a spring adventure, use your Albertan advantage and enjoy southern France. We may not jump directly from our igloos into the river, but we're definitely able to enjoy the beach earlier than most. And I suspect that in June, July and August, when there are big crowds and bigger price tags, it would be too hot for us, anyway. If you ask our kids about their trip they will spend a long time telling you about the beaches and then say, "We saw a lot of castles and museums too." O



THE SAWRIDGE



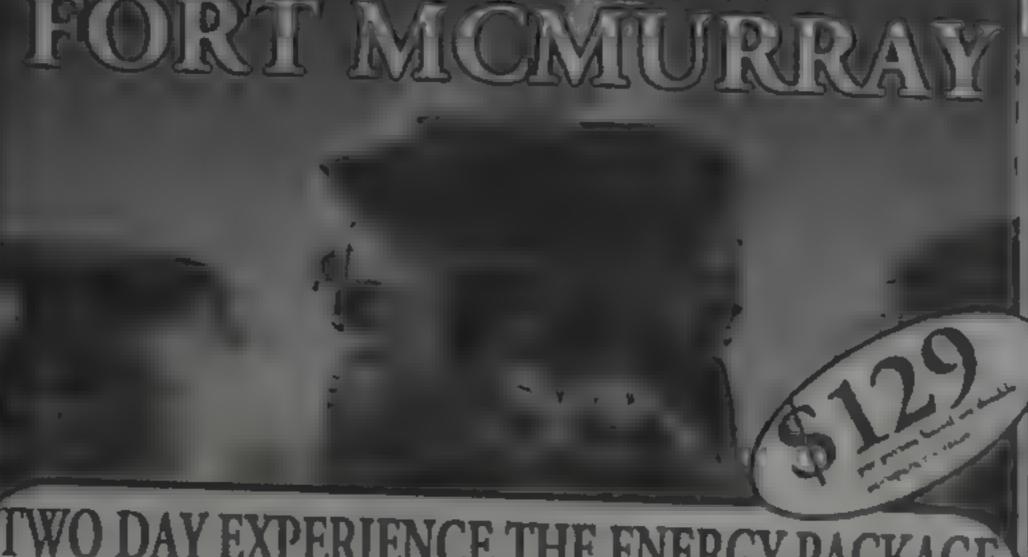
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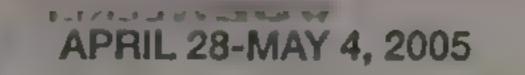


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co ride it on the mountain

Edmonton's river valley is the perfect spot for a day-long mountain-biking trek

BY CAROLYN NIKODYM

Then my friend James called me early Saturday morning to meet up for our bike ride, I had been struggling with my timek time for what felt like an eternity. The tube was flat and I was getting cranky. I had been fantasizing about the day's ride all neek, and by 8 a.m., the sun was up, making

a liar out of all the cynical weekend predictions I'd heard. It was the first weekend in months that I didn't

have homework to do and I had written my last exam the day before. I just wanted to get going. I wanted to feel the air slide across my face.

It was exactly that thought that settled my nerves and my ego enough to allow me to permit James come over and help me with my tube. After a quick breakfast of fruit and yogust, I strapped on my trusty helmet and we took off. We headed west from 124 Street along 102 Avenue before dipping down onto the trail at 133 Street. With a shit-eating grin on my face, I quickly forgot

my early morning flat tire frustration. It wasn't long before we stopped to take off our jackets. That the sun was shining was a bonus. Then again, biking in the rain is gratifying in its own way—even when you get so muddy you have to peel your dirty clothes off in the shower.

I discovered the joys of mountain biking while living in the Rockies during the '90s. Every day after work in the summer, I would head out to play on the trails—usually always coming back with a cut or two on my legs. I, of course, am a comparative latecomer to the sport, which developed in California during the '70s when riders began taking old singlespeed balloon-tire bikes on downhill adventures. These single-speed bikes had

limitations, but it wasn't long before innovative riders rigged them up with thumbshift-operated

derailleurs. With squishy tires, comfortable saddles and the upright position, these new bikes drew the interest of those who wanted to steer away from the hard ride of the road bike. By 1986, interest in mountain bikes had reached critical mass and sales surpassed those of road bikes.

And Edmonton's river valley is a perfect place to ride them. The 48-kilometre stretch along the North Saskatchewan boasts about 150 kilometres of multi-use trails and 450

SEE PAGE 39





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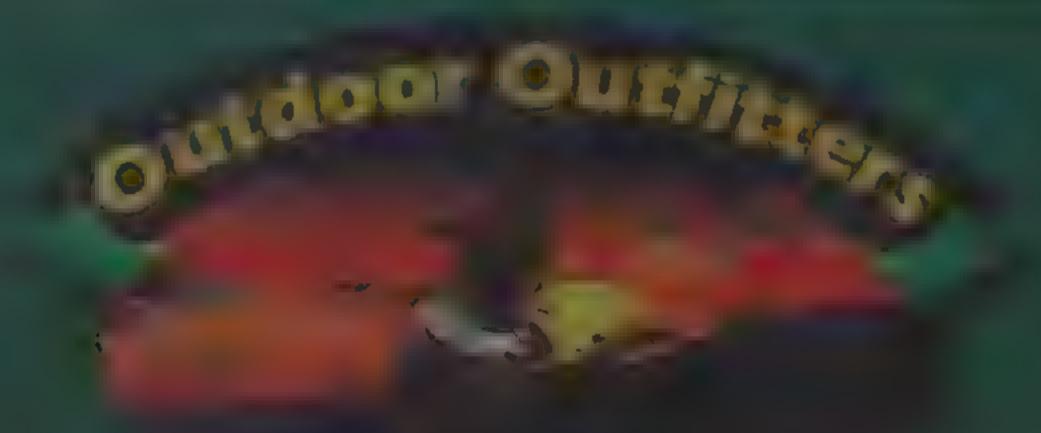
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Continued from page 39

etres of unimproved trails, all of which The river valley is also the gest expanse of urban parkland in North erica. In the '60s and '70s, the proposed e for the valley was a roadway system, nich probably seems inconceivable to anyse who has used the trails over the last 30 ears. Just last year, after years of observaon, the parkland bylaw was updated to recnize mountain biking as a viable use of and system. There were safety concerns ; arding cyclists sharing the trail with ilkers. There's a code of conduct for bikers: law requires you to have a bell, to pass thers with care and control and to avoid rging new trails. "There are hundreds of nometres of trail to use, so use them," says laire Stock, who you may have heard on ISR on Wednesday mornings delivering her icycle Traffic Report. And James and I took er advice to heart.

y paved trails, but there are plenty of woodsy alls to play in around 139 Street. That's mere James and I took our first off-road ride of the year. The sun filtered through towering pine, cooling the first trickles of sweat on my prow. I remembered how to work the gears to maximize the roller coaster action of the hills. and this was just a warm-up before we headed over to the south side.

After a quick café stop, James and I raced along the paved path to the LRT bridge. By 10 a.m., there were plenty of joggers and trollers populating the trail, but within five ninutes we were crossing the bridge and neading toward Belgravia along the unpaved trail. By Kinsmen Park, parts of the trail

were still icy and muddy. The ice was melting off in little streams into the river, and we carefully negotiated the icy slop. I could feel its coolness wafting up into my face. As I rode on to Emily Murphy Park, I could feel my body surge with adrenaline. And the race in my mind was on: if I stopped, I was sure my legs would continue moving in a circular motion.

When James called out to stop at Hawrelak Park, I whined.' I had the itch—there's

I was the greedy child;
I didn't care where we went, as long as I could continue to ride

something very addictive about self-propelled speed. However, when you do take time to stop, there are things you see that you can't when you're whizzing by on your bike. A squirrel sat on a tree limb above us, nervously peering at us from behind its pine cone lunch, as we decided whether to go down through the Valley Zoo or head south to Whitemud Park. I was the greedy child; I didn't care where we went, as long as I could continue to ride.

The trail from Hawrelak Park follows the southward bend in the river. My breath became heavy yet steady as I attacked the rolling hills. It was top gear all the way down, with a quick switch to a lighter gear to propel me back up the climbs. Although the sun was heating things up, I was cooled by the trees and my own momentum.

By the time we head back to the north side, my legs were jelly and my bum was sore—but I was already excited for next week-end's ride. •









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Everything's duckie

Intlatable kayaks
are a great way for
beginning paddlers
to get acquainted
with Alberta's rivers

BY COLIN CATHREA

ast year in our Great Outdoors edition, I wrote about inflatable more affectionately known. I received lots of e-mails and questions from beginners about duckles and where to go to learn how to maneuver them in whitewater. Well, they we had to wait a year for my response, but here's a primer on du kies for beginners," complete with furchasing information and some recommended spots in which to try them out.

The entry-level inflatable kayaks I've used for years are made by Sevylor and are now available at Coast Mountain Sports for just over \$220. The bright yellow "Tahiti" model is sold as a two-person kayak, but it's really better suited for one adult. We have had ours for five years and have run hundreds of miles of water. We have patched a few small pin-

holes along the way, but I wouldn't hesitate to do another run in it—that is, if we hadn't purchased new River X models. I can't tell you how much fun we've had throwing these things in with our camping equipment and heading off into the hills. Learning to paddle is relatively easy; start in calm water and then move gradually into faster-flowing currents. Try a lake, then something like the North Saskatchewan, and you'll be ready to head west in search of some Class I, II, and III rapids.

Obviously you'll need a good lifejacket. Before you head off to the mountains, remember this: most rivers are direct runoff from glaciers and are cold. You will need a wetsuit. We grabbed ours from Costco for \$55 each. We also strap on a couple of hockey helmets, which you can pick up used for about 10 bucks. Add in a dry bag to store cameras and other precious items like the patch kit for another \$10. If you do have a leak, the contact cement in standard patch kits dries within minutes, so you can get back on the water relatively quickly.

I suggest you drive out to Devon and try a day trip into Edmonton. This will give you an indication of what it's like to spend a day in your

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st in boat. You can pack

boat. You can pack a small cooler with a day's provisions and strap in the dry bag. I also recommend tipping the kayak over first and practising getting back in. Getting to shore and dumping out water is an important lesson to learn before you hit any Class II or III water. If you tip

RAFTING

over these boats, they become big liferafts to hold onto until you can right yourself and climb back in.

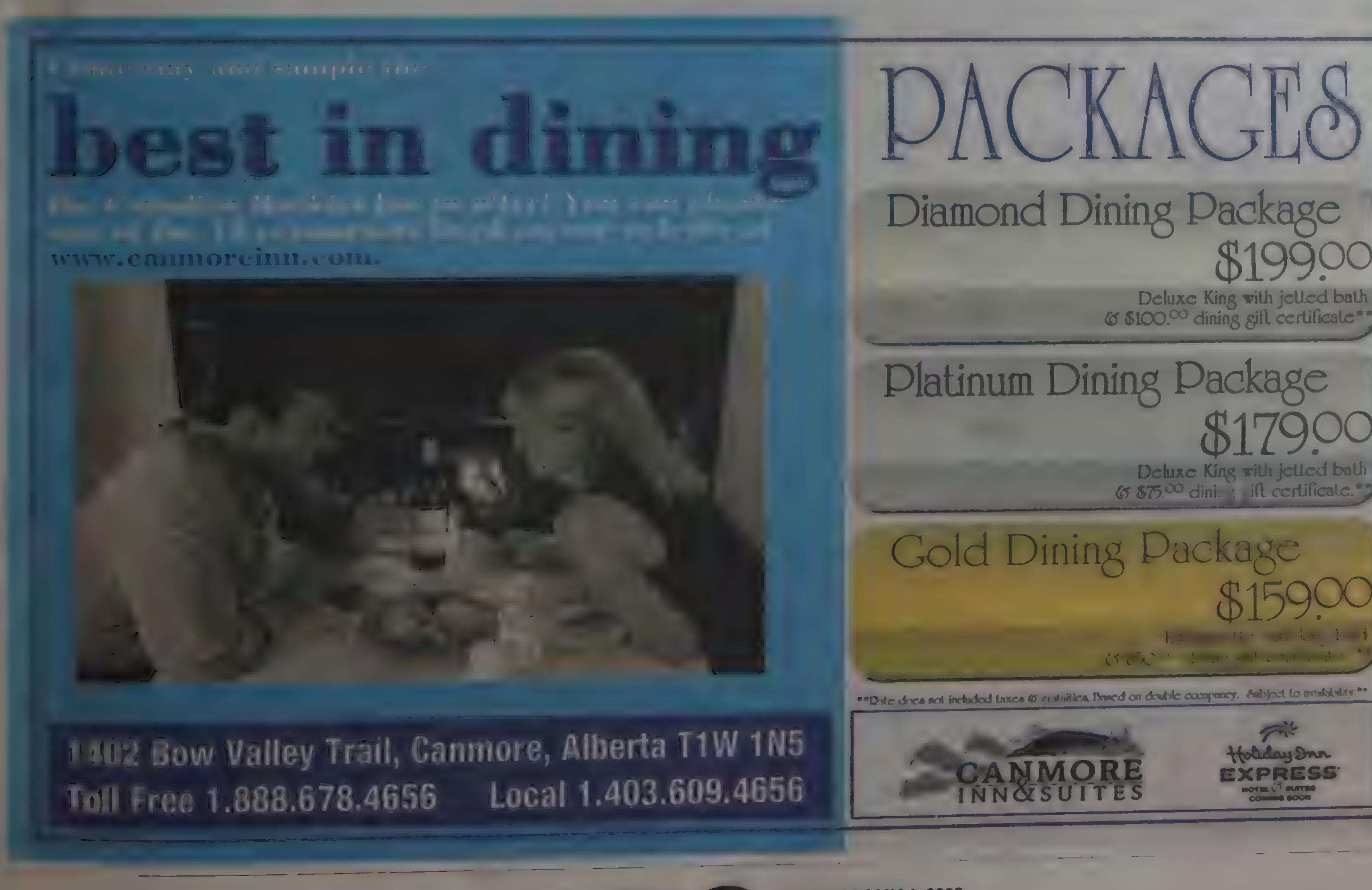
THE ATHABASCA RIVER, running right through Jasper, is a great beginner's-level river. It's quick and cold, but not too rough. It's also one of the most beautiful and breathtaking runs you'll find anywhere. You can start upstream of Jasper at the five-

mile bridge and follow some rafting groups down to Old Fort Point. Drive from the town down the Parkway for 10.5 kilometres and look for a gravel pulloff on your right for your put-in. The run continues past the town and takes you out to where the highway crosses the river. It's a great day trip.

North and south of Hinton are at least five rivers offering Class II runs. Stuart Smith's books on Whitewater runs in the Rockies, available at Mountain Equipment Co-op, are an excellent guide to the countless that exist within just a few hours of home. (They contain lots of useful safety tips too, like notifying friends and family of your exact schedule before starting a river trip.)

One other option beginners might want to consider is joining a club. The Mistaya Paddling Club, the Northwest Voyageurs Canoe and Kayak Club and the U of A Paddling Club offer cheap rentals, beginner to expert instruction and well-planned excursions almost every weekend. They don't have inflatables, but they do offer a wide range of hard body kayaks.

As for us, we planned the Blackstone River last year but never made it, so we've rescheduled for the spring. It's south of Hinton and has some good day trips, as do the McCloud and Brazeau. Fishing these rivers is fun and relatively easy. The Blackstone has nice Class II and III runs, and before you know it, you'll have covered a lot of territory. We will also get into the Kicking Horse again. Staying at Beaverfoot Lodge, sleeping in chuckwagons and going horseback riding on "off water" days make for a great trip. O



Girls gone w

Outdoor businesses have found a huge, enthusiastic market for all-female adventure tours

BY SUE KERNAGHAN

t's like a disco bump," says Bonny Glambeck, explaining the finer points of sea kayaking in terms this city girl can understand. Glambeck, co-owner of Tofino's Rainforest Kayak Adventures, is describing the "hip flick," an important boat-handling technique, and are heading to her lodge in the one worth knowing when you're out exploring the wilderness in a onewoman craft. And it's easy... for some. "Hip flicks are a natural for women," Glambeck says. "We also have physical stamina and a low centre of gravity, so we're well-suited to kayaking."

Glambeck and her partner Dan Lewis run kayaking and camping trips in the pristine wilderness of Clayoquot Sound, off the west coast of Vancouver Island. They're also part of a growing number of British Columbia operators offering wilderness adventure trips specifically tailored toward women. Each summer, Glambeck runs two all-women trips, as well as co-ed paddles and custom adventures for anyone who wants to get a few friends together. The allwomen trips have their own vibe, she says, and it's not just the ease of hip-flicking that makes them that way. Glambeck has observed that women tend to be more confident in all-female groups, and they learn sports differently than men do, preferring to finesse a physical task rather than relying on muscle.

"And we laugh a lot," she says.

"In a group of women, you can completely relate to where the other person is coming from."

Myrna Boulding, owner of Strathcona Park Lodge and Outdoor Education Centre, has noticed the same thing. More and more women mountainous heart of Vancouver Island to canoe, hike, climb and get to know one another. Why? "Women have a lot of fun together," she observes. "They bond in a way that men don't."

Women are also more likely than men to opt for an outdoor adventure holiday. According to travel industry expert Marybeth Bond, writing in California Tourism Insights magazine, 75 per cent of the people taking nature, adventure or cultural trips are women. "Ten years ago there were no such statistics. Now we know that the average adventure traveler is not a 28-year-old male, but a 47-year-old female." Outdoor educator Paul Hansen has seen the trend in action. As we kayak together through the clear green waters of Sechelt Inlet, I ask if his outdoor lessons are any different for men's groups. "Men? I've never had a men's group," he confesses.

Paul and his wife Patti own and operate the West Coast Wilderness Lodge, a view-blessed hiking, kayaking, rock-climbing and relaxing resort a few hours north of Vancouver. They estimate that about 70 per

cent of their guests are women. Men and women come in pairs and families, but the groups out for a weekend of bonding and adventure are invariably women. And they're not just sporty youngsters either: a widow's retreat held recently at the lodge saw women in their 70s and

80s trying outdoor activities, in some cases for the first time. Beginners often surprise themselves with how much they can do during a weekend at the lodge. This has a lot to do with the skill of the guides and with the owners' philosophy. The idea, says Paul Hansen, is "to make wilderness adventure accessible to people of all ages, shapes and skill levels."

ANOTHER GOOD OPTION for city slickers hoping to get in touch with

their outdoorsy side is a Women's Adventure Weekend at Horne Lake Adventure Camp. Held once a month in summer, these camps gather about a dozen women for a weekend of rock-climbing, rappelling, canoeing, caving and camping in a fun and supportive atmosphere. No experience is necessary. "All you need is a positive attitude," says camp co-ordinator Erin Arctander.

Horne Lake Adventure Camp is a rustic outdoor centre near one of B.C.'s most extensive cave systems. Staff there began offering women's adventure weekends about a year ago, says Arctander, "because we saw a need for something a little more adventurous. There are a lot of places women can go for a massage or a body wrap, but there aren't many places they can try rock-climbing and caving in an all-female group."

The weekends draw a range of

campers, from women who work in the outdoors to people who've never before slept in a tent (or, in this case, a teepee). "They really cheer each other on, and usually finish the weekend as great friends," says Arctander. Over on Vancouver Island's west coast, Surf Sister, founded by Tofino-born surfing champion Jenny Stewart, offers Canada's only allwomen surf camps. (Guys are welcome in the daily lessons.) Stewart and her team of female instructors show would-be surfers of all ages how to catch the waves off the spectacular stretch of sand at Long Beach. The 16-mile (41-kilometre) forest-backed beach, part of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, is, says Stewart, the most popular place to surf in Canada.

FOR ANOTHER high-adrenaline experience, check out Spokeswomen Mountain Bike Camps at Whistler





Carmichael, a former ica mountain bike racer, ; d spokeswomen in 1996, The women-only bike coursthe longest-running of n ile-tocused adventure com-Carmichael and her team run The Classes at the Whistler Mounprike Park, a network of downhill . j cress-country bike trails at the , aux mountain resort (and 2010) smpic venue) two hours north of ocomer.

After an evening of orientation and bike fitting, cyclists whiz up the nountainside. (The gondola and nairlifts used by skiers in winter are are quick to get to know each other and support one another. These camps are like a girlfriends' weekend, and it's not every weekend you get to hang out with 30 other girls."

Women-only mountain sports are also catching on in the Kootenay Rockies, where, at Fernie Alpine Resort, women have their own mountain biking clinics, in summer, and ski and snowboard classes once the snow falls. "Last year we started with one Women's Mountain Biking Weekend," says Melody Kultgen, the resort's sales and marketing manager. "We had so much fun we are running two this year." In the winter,

These camps are like a girlfriends' weekend, and it's not every weekend you get to hang out with 30 other girls."

- SALLY CARMICHAEL, SPOKESWOMEN FOUNDER

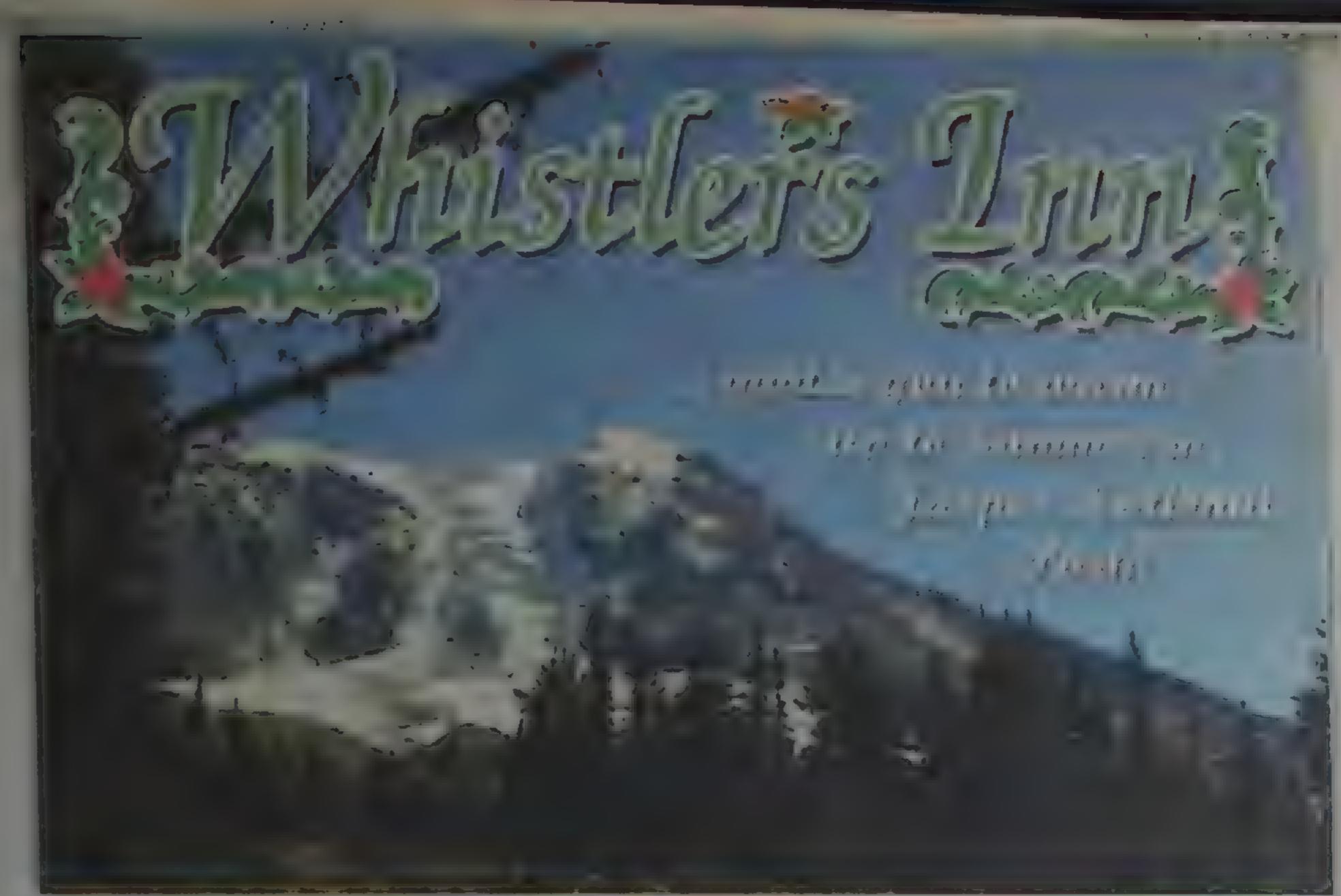
nited to carry bikes.) Then, with the Lelp of experienced female instrucincluding some professional fownhill racers, they learn the best techniques for tackling the trails. Sweeping views of the surrounding Coast Mountains are part of the deal.

Spokeswomen's weekend courses are for all levels, from people new to off-road biking to serious downhill racers. The average age is 35, but cens and seniors have joined in too. armichael started the camps when he was racing professionally and other riders would ask her for tips. "I gained a huge enjoyment from watching other women succeed," she says. "There's also a great camaraderie in women's groups; women

locals and weekenders can join the You Go Girl women-only ski and snowboard lessons.

Both programs have been big hits, Kultgen says, partly because of the comfort level involved. "Women feel a little more comfortable learning with other women. The classes are also a nice way to meet other people at the same skill level, and perhaps find riding or skiing buddies. It's a social get-together as much as a learning experience."

It's that bonding thing again. Sorry guys. Whether we're out surfing, kayaking, camping, rappelling, rock-climbing, caving, hiking or just hanging around the campfire, sometimes it's just more fun this way.







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Life in A Northern Chorus

Bitter Hands Resign band didn't resign themselves to pitterness when priginal tour plans tell apart

BY LEAH COLLINS

omewhere out on the vast Canadian Shield between Sudbury and Winnipeg, Alex McMaster has ailled over to a side-of-the-road payhone. She's laughing a lot-most kely because her band's guitarist, tu Livingstone, keeps distracting et, looming over her shoulder and hattering on the payphone next to hers—but between the giggles, she's xplaining that her group, A Northin Chorus, wouldn't have had the bod fortune to end up on this etch of northern highway had it of been for a little hard work and genuity.

Several months back, the band as slated to join melancholy foralaxie 500-ers Damon and taomi for a spring tour of North ...lerica. But when they were uncermoniously dropped from Damon d Naomi's travel plans less than a bouth before showtime, A Northern horus found itself forced to take ontrol of the situation. McMaster unds happy with the band's course action—a self-organized five-week our of Canada and the U.S.—but is still a little confused as to why ley had to go through all that noinger-a-supporting-act trouble in he first place.

"It's sort of a mystery to us," she
"ys, "but I guess there was some
"neern on Damon and Naomi's
"art about there not being enough

advance publicity, and they decided to scale it down and just go by themselves rather than take an opener with them. It was a bit of a disappointment, but we were able to salvage what we could and we're still doing a bunch of shows in the States. It wasn't a lot of time to book; there was a lot of last-minute fitting in places.

"You just kind of have to keep going," she continues. "We were all kind of disappointed for a few days, but then it's like you can either let it get you down or just make the best of it. And in the end, I think we put together a really good tour on our own."

MCMASTER AND HER CELLO joined up with A Northern Chorus in the spring of 2004 for the band's previous tour, a jaunt through the



U.K. The trip went so well that the band's dreamy, epic music was getting Broken Social Scene-level buzz by the time they got back to their southern Ontario home. Since then, A Northern Chorus has been busy putting together their latest album, the recently released Bitter Hands Resign, a slow-building 45minute collection of spacy songs about feelings. And now, for the next month, they're ready to share it with whoever'll listen, though McMaster jokes that she has a few apprehensions about being cooped up with her four bandmates. "This is definitely the longest that I've been out with them for," she laughs. "We're only on day four now," she says, pausing to expel a heavy, melodramatic breath. "So we'll see."

Joking aside, McMaster's not too

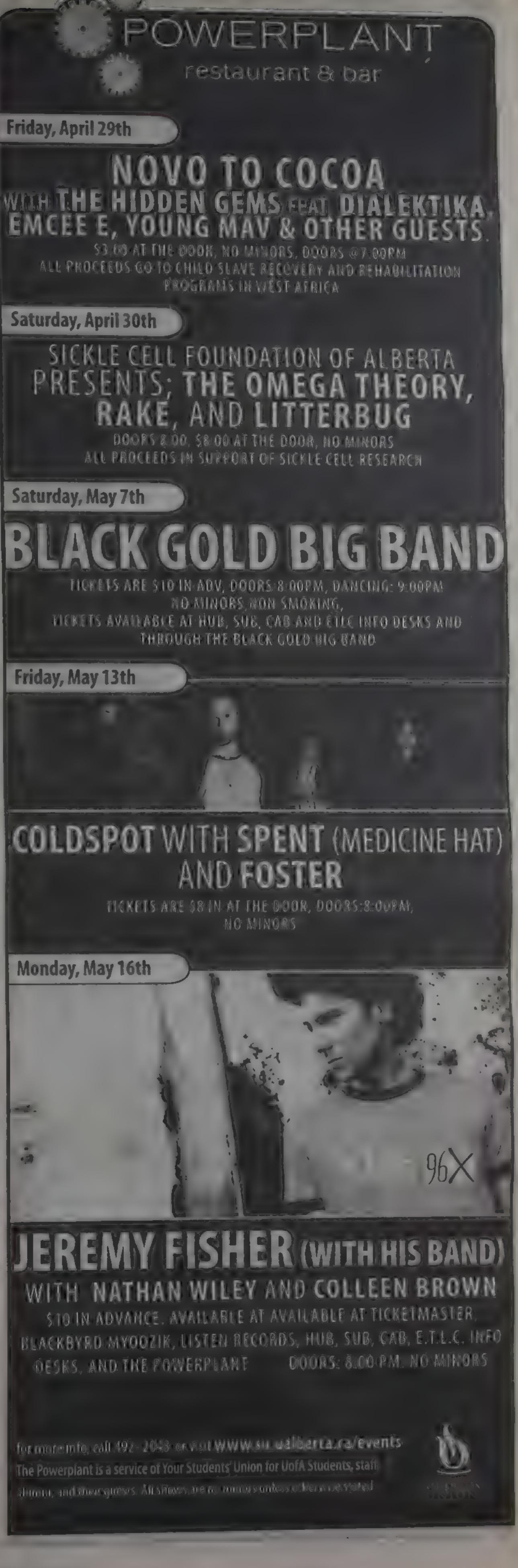
worried about her traveling companions: they're all too laid back, she says, for any in-fighting to break out. That, and they all share a healthy sense of humour, heavily inspired by the Will Ferrell. She says the band can't stop watching the Saturday Night Live Best of Will Ferrell DVD, to the point they tend to communicate through a series of rehashed jokes.

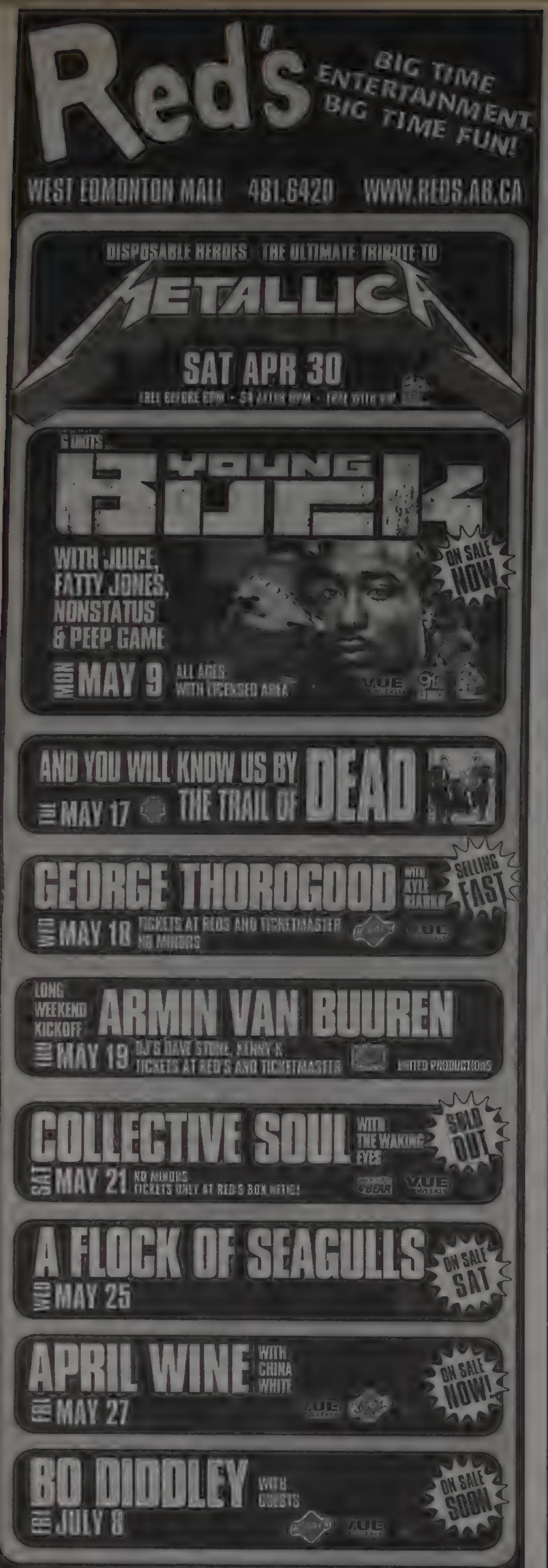
"Ohmigod, the cowbell sketch is one of the funniest things ever," McMaster laughs, referring to the SNL skit featuring Ferrell as a manic, midriff-baring member of Blue Öyster Cult who lays down the infamous cowbell beat for "Don't Fear the Reaper." The band loves the skit so much they have a link to it on their website, but don't expect A Northern Chorus's arrangements of strings and ethereal guitars to make room for "more cowbell" anytime soon.

"Oh good lord, I can't even picture where cowbell would fit," she erupts with laughter. "It's like another kind of music; cowbell's so rock 'n' roll, so '70s and so different from what we do. A Northern Chorus is ambient, emotive." She pauses thoughtfully. "It's pop. I guess I don't know what else to classify it as. To me, pop is essentially anything with a strong melody. I wouldn't know what else to call our music. It's definitely not rock, and it's not really classical, although people tend to use that word 'chamber pop,' though I don't know.... I don't think we ever set out to write epic, slowbuilding stuff per se; it's just what comes out. You never know, the next record could be entirely different; it could be all three-minute songs." O

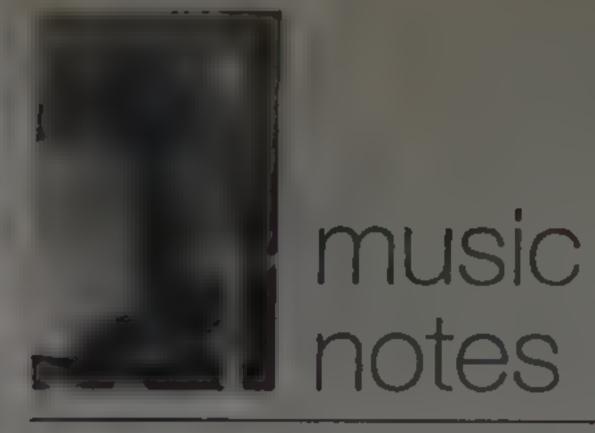
A NORTHERN CHORUS

With the Fine Options and Wooly Mammoth • Sidetrack Café • Wed, May 4 (8pm)





MISIC



BY PHIL DUPERRON AND ROSS MOROZ

Idal bands are the devil's workshop

The Fine Options • With A Northern Chorus and Woolly Mammoth • Sidetrack Café • Wed, May 4 (8pm) Perhaps because of my seething dislike of Ben Mulroney, or possibly because of a general aversion to vacuity in all of its forms, I cannot claim to be much of an expert on the television program Canadian Idol. My ignorance of

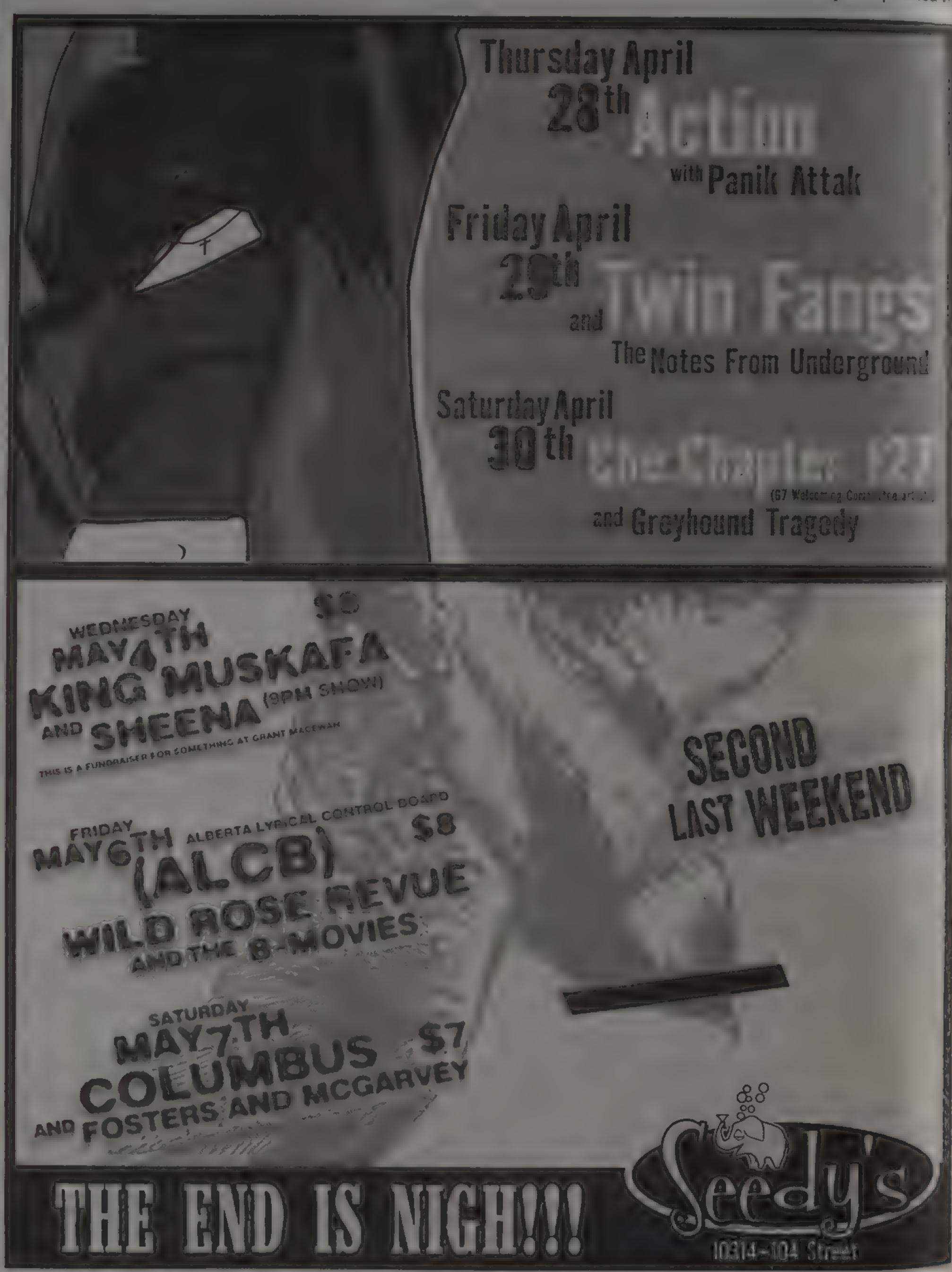
this Canadian institution never hindered me in my capacity as a music writer here at *Vue*, however, until my recent chat with Victoria's the Fine Options, who have what can only be described as a bizarre connection to Canada's national, ahem, "talent" show.

"We actually recorded with [Idol runner-up] Theresa Sokyrka once," reports Fine Options guitarist Colin McKill sheepishly. After a quick websearch proved that I am, indeed, the only Canadian who hasn't heard of the Saskatchewan native and Red Deer College graduate's adventures in generic soft-pop-rock, McKill admitted that seeing his former collaborator participating in the spectacle that is Idol was a little bewildering. "It's been kind of strange watching her, um, meteoric rise," McKill laughs. And while the Fine Options' career hasn't been helped along by a massive televised celebration of mediocrity, the band has been gaining fans for their decidedly un-Canadian Idol-friendly sound.

"We're definitely not trying to sound like anybody, but at the same time we definitely take cues from what's going on around us," McKill says. "Less than being influenced by a band, we're more likely to take something away from specific songs or parts of songs."

That said, McKill does admit to being more than a little influenced by one particular Canadian group: "The first time you hear Death Fram Above," he says, "it's hard not to take something away from that."

The influence of the Toronto duo, along with hints of Queens of the Stone Age and fellow Victorians Hot Hot Heat, are apparent on White Rose, the Options' second EP, released in the summer of 2004. The record's crisp production and catchy tunes belie the fact that, according to the Options' website, the budget for the disc topped out at roughly \$60, but Mckill is quick to point out that, even with minimal expenses, being in a touring rock band is invariably complicated by



banal constraints of not having hime.

"It's so lame, but 'real life' sort of whibits us from doing as much of who, at 26 years old, is thankful just to of me thinks I have to grow up and quit wandering around aimlessly, but the other part just says 'Aww, that's so lame.'" (RM)

There's an Uncas among us

The Uncas . With the Grassroot Deviation and Slow Talkin' Walter · Sidetrack Café · Sat, Apr 30 After four years of boot-stompin' and guitarpickin' around Edmonton and western Canada, The Uncas are gearing up for their first full-blown coast-to-coast tour. And even though they've never even been east of Winnipeg, bassist/singer Futch Uncas figures their recent national TV appearance on Much Does Edmonton ought to translate into a bit of interest for the country-punks out east. "It was pretty good," he says, "we got some response, people were actually watching it out in TV Land. It's probably one of the only chances you'll get to be seen across the country, and Sunday night was a pretty good slot. There's lots of popular shows on, and I -think people flip around a lot to Much-Music and stuff, so I'm sure it was seen by quite a few people."

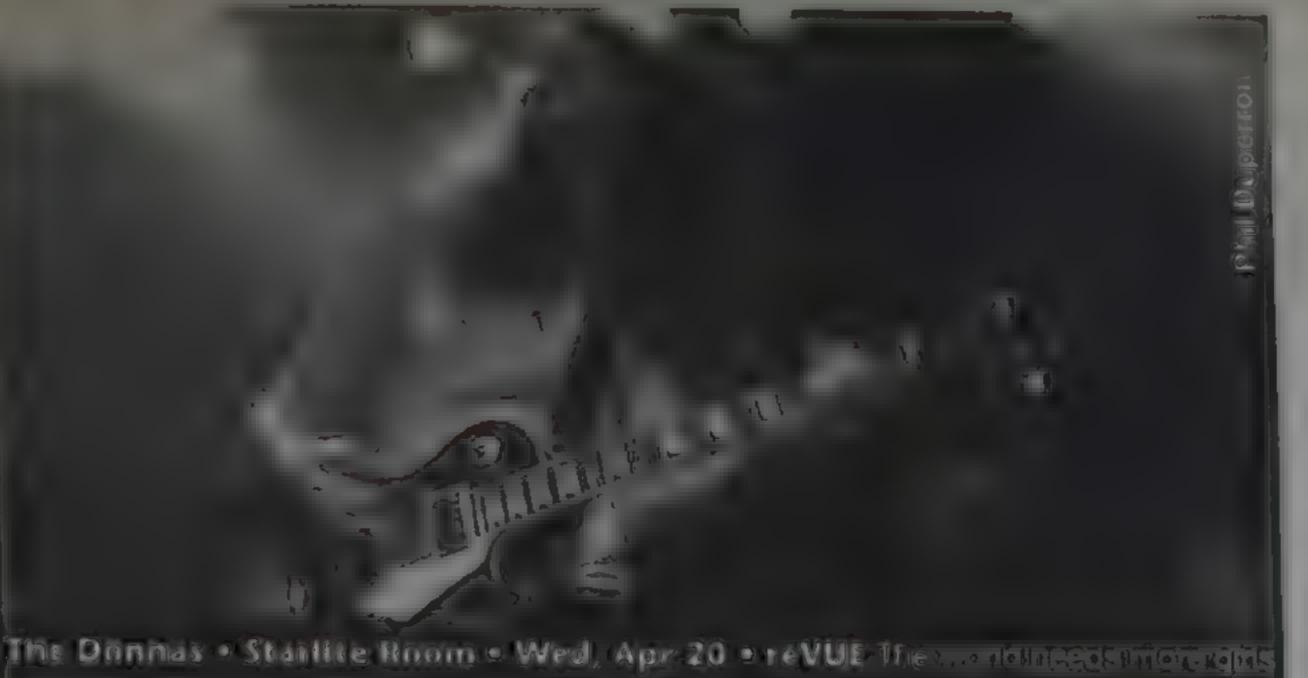
Unfortunately, their spot on Much didn't show much of the over-the-top live show that's made the Uncas a crowd favourite around these parts. It did, however, show the sawdust flying as they took their power tools to a helpless guitar to get the crowd all riled up at the start of the show—a practice they started during their first appearance at the North Country Fair in 2002, when they sacrificed Sook Uncas' childhood guitar to the rock gods. In the hands of band member John Carpenter (who's an actual carpenter), even everyday lumber (which is much cheaper than guitars on the road) turns into a hilarious stage prop.

"He knows how to spray the sawlust really well, so it's like a smoke
nachine," says Uncas. "And it makes
he bar smell like a toolshed, so it's pretcool. It's a little bit cheesy and we're
aware of that, but at the same time,
whatever, people like it, people laugh,
and that's what we're about. As long as
you back up the kitsch with good music
and you're not just some crappy band
that depends on that." (PD)

Kid rock?

Collapsing Opposites • With the faunts, Storyboard, Por Nada and Hinterland • Starlite Room • Sat, Apr 30 The ongoing debacle that is the Michael Jackson trial is not exactly painting adults with an obsession with Childhood in the most positive light these days. And while Vancouver's Ryan McCormick doesn't have much to say about Jackson's current woes, he does say his musical project Collapsing Opposites owes much to his fascination with childhood.

"I like kids a lot," says the 24-year"I musical who counts nursery
rhymes, Christmas songs and campfire
in a solution of his greatest musical



The Donna's Stanlike Room • Wed, Apr. 20 • reVUE The and incompression rights in content willing to sell their souls managed in their and more imperior related when it stands getting rough if new ords like a hot potato when it stands getting rough if new ords like a hot potato when it stands getting rough if new ords like a hot potato when it stands getting rough if new ords like a hot potato when it stands getting rough if the assessment they have to. Sure their gehicks probably if the them in the spotlight, but their devorted and talent have kept them there for 10 years with the endling stands after their solid Wednesday-night set of hook-laden rock with sweet after tassy transformers only two things confused and disturbed mes one, however, and order and two, who the hell were all the thirty something guys yelling along with them? (PD)

influences. "It's amazing how much energy they have. It's inspiring."

To McCormick, his interest in child-hood is merely a reflection of a much larger trend in modern society. "We live in curious times, for sure," he says. "There's a lot of 'heavy' stuff going on in the world, but getting all down about it isn't going to help anything. I think as we reach adulthood we all get a little jaded. When we were kids, everything was so much easier. I think my music is for adults who are nostalgic for their childhood. It's kind of strange, because I don't think kids would really want to listen to my music."

The music of Collapsing Opposites is largely built around loops built live and on the fly, a process McCormick sees as more organic than traditional sampling. And while he does admit that having a few more bodies onstage would probably make the Opposites' live show a little less frantic for him, McCormick sees a big upside to being a one-man-band. "The nice thing about being a one-man band is that the band is probably never going to break up," McCormick laughs. "I guess I've always reveled in being an independent person."

When the topic of Michael Jackson is again broached (I observe that MJ apparently also preferred to work alone) McCormick laughs and explains that, while he doesn't care to speculate about Jackson's supposed guilt or innocence, he does have a theory regarding the King of Pop's general weirdness. "I don't know too much about his psychology," McCormick says, "but I think maybe he just wishes he was still the little boy who was singing 'A-B-C, 1-2-3."

Don't we all, sir. (RM)

Refilling the Tank

Shark Tank Benefit • With 3daybinge, London Disturbance Force, Youth Unit, No Verdict, Fan the Fire, the Girls Club, Just Drive, the One and Only and Goldenboy • Shark Tank • Sat, Apr 30 (1pm, all ages) As Edmonton's only permanent all-ages venue, the Shark Tank fills a very important niche in the scene. It may be a sparse, concrete bunker in a rugged part of town, but tons of local and touring bands have shook those walls, and countless kids have literally bounced off

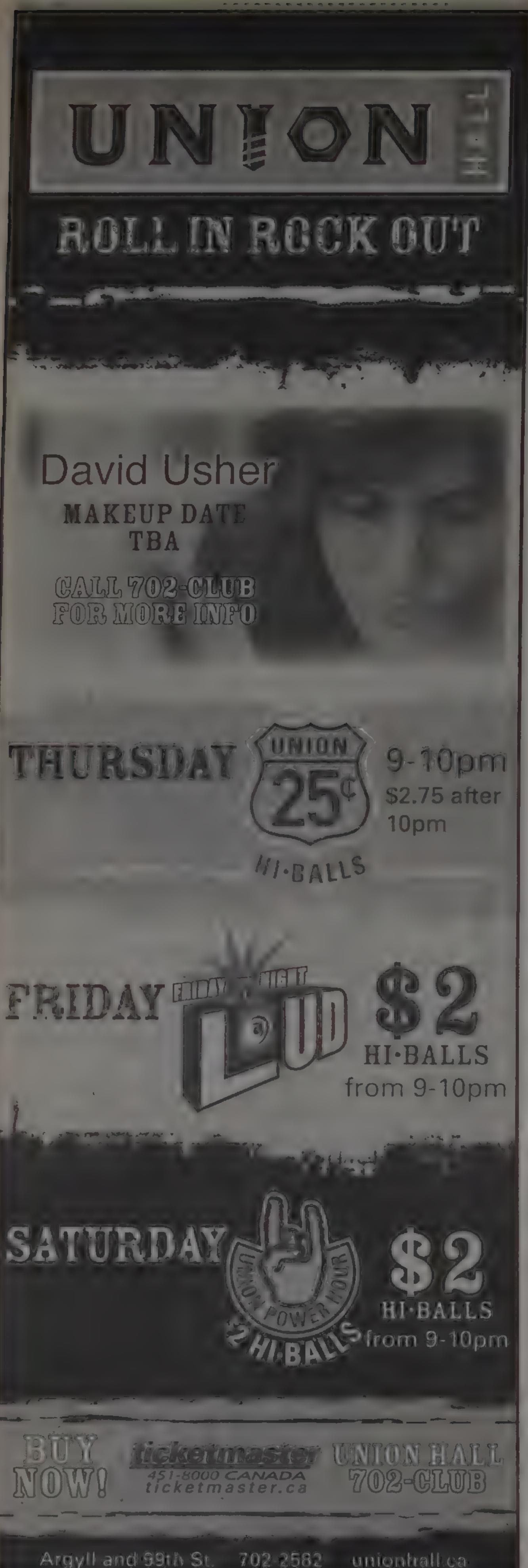
them to the throbbing rhythms of punk rock. So when James and Tracy Kuczmarski returned to their business a couple of days after a show earlier this month to discover the place had been robbed and the PA missing, things looked pretty dark. Although they had to cancel one gig, there were too many good shows on the horizon for them to throw in the towel—and, as they say, the show must go on. They've managed to get their hands on enough equipment to crank up the volume in the meantime, and with the help of a slew of willing talent, they're holding a pair of benefit shows (the Victory Lounge will be throwing in the door proceeds from their Saturday night show as well) to fix the problem for good.

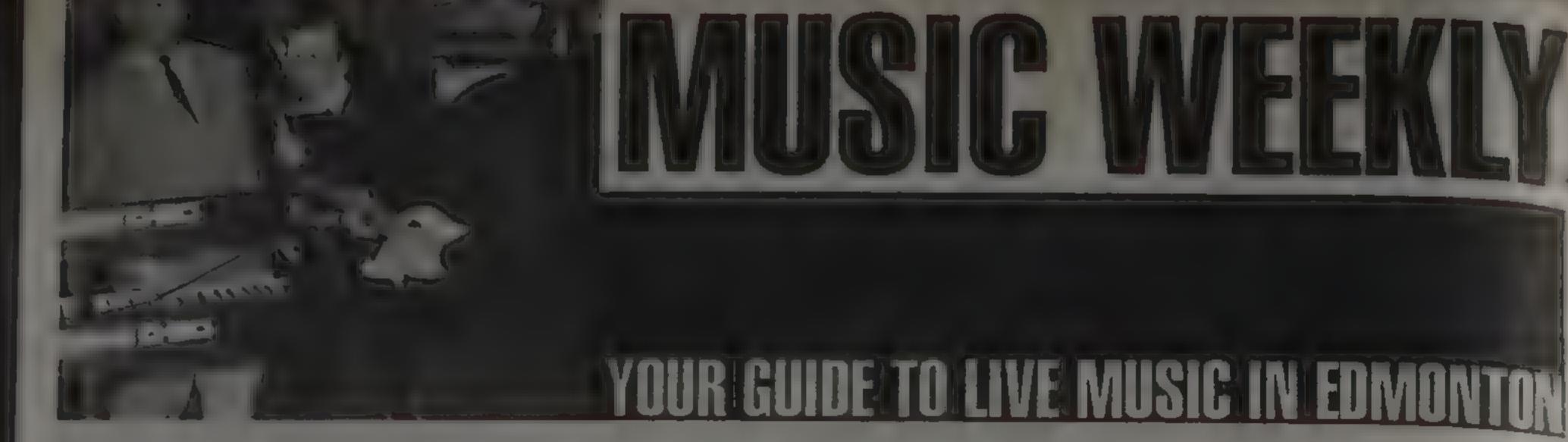
One of the acts helping them out is Winnipeg's 3daybinge, who had just run into some trouble of their own when I caught up to them during a tour stop in Jasper. I'd just about given up on tracking the skatepunk trio down when singer/bassist RJ finally gave me a call to offer a justifiable excuse for his tardiness. "We went to a bar last night and drank a bunch of gallons of beer," he mumbled. "Then I think I got too drunk and the cops showed up at this party and I started pissing them off. They drove me outta town and they left me on the highway. I have no idea how I made it back, but I made it. I was singing really loud to myself to let the bears know there was a guy walking."

RJ may have rotten luck when it comes to dealing with cops while under the influence, but the band is in better shape than half the people they've been playing to lately. "In Vancouver," he says, "we basically gave our discs away because nobody in Vancouver has any money, man. We met [SNFU singer Mr. Chi Pig] and gave him a ride home and had to lend him two bucks for a pack of smokes." (PD)

CORRECTION: in last week's issue of Vue, we erroneously stated that Run Chico Run's Thursday, April 28 show would be at Queen Alexandra Hall; in fact, Run Chico Run will be playing the Shark Tank, accompanied by the Vertical Struts, the Doers, All Purpose Voltage Heroes and Mark Birtles Project. We apologize for any inconvenience this error may have caused.







Fax your free listings to 426-2319 pr e-mail to Glenys at listings@vueweekly.com Deadline is Friday at 3pm

ATLANTIC TRAP AND CILL Kim Fontaine and Michelle Boudreau

BACKDRAUGHT PUB Open stage

BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL Sessions, Opal Road; 9pm; \$2

BOGANI CAFÉ Marc Beaudin's lazz Tno

ENGINEE ASITEMAMATERS. Looker (pop/rock)

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPPE Open stage hosted by Ron Taylor; 7:30-10pm

CEILI'S Screech; 9pm

REPORT A STRUCK Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude; 6-10pm

ENURY OF AFORYAL PARE Chuck Brown

DUSTER'S PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch

FOUR ROOMS Blake Kinley

GRINDER Open stage hosted by Duane Sparks; 9-12pm

J.J.'S PUB Knucklehead

J AND R BAR AND GRILL Open stage with The Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues); 8:30pm-12.30am

NEWY CITY LIKEND LOUIS OF Cursed, Mare, The Franklins; 8pm (door)

SEEDY'S Action, Panik Attak, The Intensives

SHARK TANK Vertical Struts, The Doers, Mark Birtles Project, Run Chico Run, All Purpose Voltage Heroes; 7pm (door), 7:30 (show); \$7 (member)

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Lovertine (CD release party), The Cape May; 8pm; \$7 (door)

UNBAR LOUNGE LANGE Thorax; \$5

STUDIO 27 Bianca Baciu (piano); 6:30pm; free

ARMOURY Vintage Thursdays. retro rock, dance and old school hip hop

BACKROCK VOTESA BAR Animation Station: trip hop, drum 'n' bass with MC Deadly, Gundam, Dale Force

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Escapack Entertainment

BLACK UNG PREEMBILIE Thump: intronica with the DDK Soundsystem

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB DJ Squiggles

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE Thursday Ladies Night: Top 40, R&B, retro with Urban Metropolis

FILTHY McNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

VUEWEEKLY

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

CULLTY MANITUM Smither Exams Summer Kick-off Jam: with DJ Majess, MC Keith Dean, Invinceable, IpMoney, Shortround, Echo; no minors; 9pm (door); \$5 (before 11pm):

LONG BERS Hot Latin Nights; free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

Rub A Dub Thursdays: Reggae, ska, dub with Jebus and His Apostles |

MENT CITY LINEARS LIGHNALS

REFERENCE TO STREET, THE STREE Progress: electro/new wave with DI Miss Mannered and guests; no minors

POWER PLANT Ship Night for resident students

RED STAR Underground Hip Hop Night: with DJ Mumps, DJ **Dusty Crates**

RENDEZVOUS Metal Night with DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT MAID LOLLS & E Sun kelatized Thursday: funk with DJ Leanne

Fong SAVOY Funk and downtempo

with Ben Jamin

SEEDY'S DJ night STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Top 40

dance, R&B VELVEY LONGINGE UI Land

Substance: hip hop/R&B end of exams Jam with Spincycle, Invinceable, J-Money, Sean B VICTORY LOUNCE MINUS

WLCM Thursdays

WUNDERBAR HOF-**BRAUHAUS** Dis Wunderbar Hofbrauhaus: Punk with Robin Schroffel

IVE MUSIC

ATTLANTIC TRUE AND GHLL Acoustiholics

BELLIA BEANS COFFEE CAPE Acoustic open stage; 7:30-10pm

BLIND PIG Trainwreck

EO'S BAR AND CRILL Slowburn (blues/rock); 8pm, MOTOGRAM

CASINO YELLOWINEAC Looker (pop/rock)

CEILI'S The Kick It Bros; 9pm

COSMOPOLITAN MUSIC SOCIETY Mana Dunn, Terry Morrison; 8pm; \$15; tickets available at Myre's Music, Acoustic Music

ENDIRE FOR KIRKEYILL PLUT Chuck Brown FOUR ROOMS Blake Kinley

J.P. RANCH SALDON North Border Line (rock and roll)

JEFFREYS CAFÉ AND WINE BAR Anna Beaumont (jazz), 7:30 pm, \$5

REVACABILE PUB The Haymakers (classic rock) PERPERSIS

PURIER PLANT NUMBER Cocoa, The Hidden Gems, Dialektika, Emcee e, Young

May, guests; no minors; \$3 (door); 7pm (door)

BATTLESINARE SALERON Aaron Pritchett

RED'S Phoenix foundation, Anicca; no minors; 8pm (door);

SEEDY'S Twin Fangs, The Notes from Underground

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Souljah Fyah (with guest drummer Heavy D), Ibo with KinDread; 8pm; \$10 (door)

SPORTSHARTS LEDINGE Great Escape

STARLITE ROOM 8587 Underground; all ages event;

UNION HALL Connor's Road; 9pm (door)

URBAN LOUNGE 100 Watt;

VICTORY LOUNGE Vindictive Metal: Hosted by The Vindictive Bastard

WHITTE STEP Mary Thomas (blues/rock), 8:30pm; no cover

WOODCROFT HALL Uptown Folk Club open stage; 7pm (sign-up); free (member)/\$5

(non-member) BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ Sillan and RESIDENCE STATE Same Young Hammett-Vaughan; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$12 (member)/\$16 (guest); tickets

ARMOURY Fishbone Fridays: Top 40 downstairs/retro 80 upstairs

available at TicketMaster

BOOTS Retro Disco: retro dance

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Dance party with DJ Alvaro

CALIENTE 5th Anniversary Celebration: DJ Majess and MC Keith Dean, DJ Invinceable; no minors; 10pm (door); \$10 (cover)

DECADANCE Ladies Night. Deep sexy funky beats with DJ Smoov and guests; no cover

DEVVEY STLOUPICE Outrageous Fridays: Hiphop/urban with Jsmilz

ENCAPE ULTRA LOUNCE With Urban Metropolis

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance

with DJ Christian

HALO Mod Club: '60s with DI Blue Jay, DJ Trav VD; \$5

MEAN CITA FIRMAND POLICIESE Your Weekly AA Meeting: with Anarchy Adam and Jebus

NEWS CREAT SUPURIS Trasheteria: Dogbeat, yipsycore, hairhop with Micropulse and Miss Mannered

ONE ON WHYTE Retro, top 40, R&B with DJ Crownroyal

PUTTER PLANT CLUST OF Top 40 with DJ Redpoint

RATT Immediate Gratification Fridays: with DJ Kung Fu Grip THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro

Blitz: best new European music with D) Outtawak Downstairs: DJ jazzy; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

RUM JUNGLE Peoples DI Spinning

SAPPENET RESTAURABLY AND LOUNGE Deep House with Friday resident DJ Luke A SOCIETY OF

SAVOY DI Busy B; no cover

STANDARD AN MEN 6107 Fridays: Hosted by Harman B and DJ Kwake, live to air

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Chad

VICTORY LOUNGE Vindictive Metal Fridays: Hosted by The Vindictive Bastard and quests

ALLEGNO WALLANDETTERE Terry Jorden (jazz piano); 7-10pm

ATLANTIC THAP AND CILL Acoustinolics |

BELLA BEANS COFFEE CAFÉ Judea San Pedro (singer/songwriter); 7:30-10pm; \$7

PRINCI SOUND ATTER Rubberband Live; 9pm

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Ben Spencer and Paul Bellows; 4-6pm; no cover

BLIND PIG The Shufflehound (blues/roots); 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

EUS BAR AND CRITE

Slowburn (blues/rock); 8pm; ATTOTIC TOWNSA

STATUTE OF THE OWNER AND Looker (pop/rock) DIVISION AND VILL PART

Chuck Brown DRUID (JASPER AVENUE) The Shufflehound with "Uptown" Freddy Brown

(blues/roots); 4-7pm

FOUR ROOMS Blake Kinley IRON BOAR PUB Peace Hill:

8pm; no cover J.P. RANCH SALOON North Border Line (rock and roll)

JEFFREYS CAFÉ AND WINE BAR Barefoot (rock); 7:30 pm, \$10

MEGATUNES Sillan and Young; all ages event; 3pm;

NAKED ON JASPER Boyle Street Irregulars, Agaperaygun Expenment, Steep, Becky Kop, Uncle Jimmy and the Ghetto Guests, The Swampflowers, Babe Lloyd, The Wheel of Meat; 8pm

RIERVOASTUE PUBLISHE Haymakers (classic rock)

PEPPERS Sin

POWER PLANT The Omega

Theory, Rake, Litterbug; no minors; 8pm (door); \$8 (door) **RED'S** Disposable Hereos

(Metalica tribute); 7pm BED STRAP ARTS MARKET

Open stage; 2-4pm; free RENDEZVOUS The Fisthits,

Degenerates SEEDY'S Che-Chapter 227,

Fan the Fire, Of April,

Greyhound Tragedy SHARK TANK 3 Day Binge, Fan the Fire, and more

SIDETRACK CAFE The Uncas, The Grassroot Deviation, Slow Talking Walter, 8pm; \$10 (door)

SECURTS BOXN'S LONGINGE Great Escape

STARLITE ROOM Faunts, Storyboard, Por Nada, Hinterland; no minors; 8pm (door); \$10

URBAN LOUNGE 100 Watt;

WESTWOOD CHURCH Confluence (CD release party) Steve Boddington, Tracey Lindberg; 8pm; \$10 (door)

WHISTLE STOP Mary Thomas (blues/rock); 8:30pm; no

YARDBIRD SUITE Dr. Lonnie Smith with Crash; 8pm (door) 9pm (show); \$18 (member)/\$22 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster

GLASSICAL

CONVOCATION HALL Barr Konovalov (piano); 8pm; \$2 (adult/\$15 (student/senior). tickets available at TIX on the Square

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM THEATRE Mohan Veena (Indian slide quitar), Subhen Chattenee (tabla); 7:30pm \$15 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior); tickets available at TIX on the Square

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE D! Escapade Entertainment

BOOTS Flashback Saturday

retro dance, house with Demo-BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB DI Arrowchaser

DECADANCE Static: House with Lo and Tomek

ESCAPE VETRA LOUISIGE

Urban Metropolis GAS PUMP Top 40/dance

with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI Supreme Saturdays: Urban with Elite Sounds, Invinceable, Big Sur-Shocka-Sean; 9pm; no min in no cover (before 10pm/\$/ (after)

HALO Those Who Know House with DJ Jr. Brown, Winston Roberts, Remo, r

cover IRON HORSE Urban da party with DJ 420

NEW CITY LINEARD LOUISE . Ass Shakin' Funk with Cool Curt and Breakfluid BUENEVICENDY STUBBURBIS

Punk/alt/pop/dance with Live

Jay and Nikrofeelya ONE ON WHYTE Must 1 Masses: Retro, top 40, Rese

with DJ Crownroyal RED STAR Indie rock, but fine rock, Brit pop with S Marin

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties, ne music with DJ Jazzy Downstairs: Retro mus DJ Dan and Mike; \$4 (me

RUM JUNGLE Rum Jungle endary Saturdays: Hip Hop Old School and R&B

ber)/\$6 (non-member)

SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Unique house beats with Saturday residen Tnpswitch |

STANDARD Live to Air Set STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Chad

LIVE MUSIC

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE ReClaim Sundays: Funky 1924 hosted by Rubim Metha, Land Amdt and guests; no cover



HO FIG PUB AND GRILL s control co

THEO AND JAMES TEA DEPL Specistage with Bob 3 1 7 1 pm

granes, a detis lee jam,

THE UNITED CHURCH proporting 330-

a trown lam with the

-1 or 10pm OFFRACK CAFE Under the Sar and Ci Dudeman, . ir 9pm; \$6

I. TIMOTHY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH St. David's Welsh Voice Choir, 3pm and SI 5 to Lery Appliable He consider

STEINHAUER UNITED THURCH Keri Lynn Zwicker Land Kerry McGonigle . 17 315 ,a folly/\$10 -- दिस्ति विकास

MINSPEAR CENTRE Sundays

Time & Belinda Chiang, Duo a Wend Markosky, in to to M. densen, Monica www. Staurgeon, 3pm 1 t were available at the is pertux office, TIX on he in are

WINSPEAR CENTRE May Magnificat Music for Choir and MARIE ALOND SINGERS.

teremy Spurgeon (organ/piano); 8pm; \$18 adult)/\$12 (student/senior); y at and Tible at the Contre box office

UDDY S NIGHTCLUB Sexy Sundays all night and all request dance party with Dj Eddy Toonflash

CALIENTE Urban Ladies Night: DJ Majess, MC Keith Dean, DJ Invinceable; no Fine and People The Cover (before 11pm)/\$8 (after

THE GRINDER Soul Sundays

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays: top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE

Service Commence of the Commen

ONE ON WHYTE Sunday Hospitality House Party with DI

RUM JUNGLE Service Industry Night SAVOY French Pop mixed

Crownroyal

with Deja DI

STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Somatic Sunday: progressive beats with DJ Eightsix, D)

Dfekt, guests **VICTORY LOUNGE** Self Help Sundays: punk rock, hip hop with DJ Slipped Disc

VIUNDERBAR HEF BRAUHAUS A Whole Lot of Shakin' Sundays: Rockabilly, psychobilly

HITREST WILL S BANK ANTE GRILL Open stage/jam every Monday hosted by the Retro Rockets Band; 8pm-midnight

L.B.'S PUB House band, 9:30pm-1am; no cover

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Open stage Mondays hosted by Ben Spencer, 9pm; no cover

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE DI Pennytentiary

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Ashley Love and DJ Alvaro

DEWEY'S LOUNGE Margins of Sound Mondays: Instrumental hip hop/trip hop/downtempo/dub/reggae with DJ Baggy and Pote

FILTHY McNASTY'S Metal Mondays with DJ S.W.A.G.

THE GRINDER Alternative Mondays with Indy Rock City

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Electro, Brit pop and more with Miss Mannered and Lance

O'BYRNE'S Hip Mondays: Industry night with D) Finnegan, live music

STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Maric Monday: Old skool R&B, hip hop with Harman B and DJ Kwake

VICTORY LOUNGE IPod Mondays: Be your own D), bring your iPod

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL

DRUID (JASPER AVENUE) Open stage with Chris Wynters and guest

Open stage with Mark Ammar

LEGENDS PUB Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BYRNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9:30pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Bullmoose, Axiomatik, Jets to Theory; 8pm; \$7 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Salsa and the City; 9pm; Salsa dance lessons 8pm; \$5 (door)

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE **Escapack Entertainment**

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Viva with DJ Sean

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE Bashment Tuesdays: Reggae with Bomb Squad, Q.B, Chrome Nine, Southside Sound, special guest MC, open mic; 10pm; no minors; \$5/no cover before midnight

FILTHY McNASTY'S Twisted Trivia with O) Whit-Ford

NEW CITY SUBURBS Bingo: Hosted by King Flux Alpha and DI Dildozer

PEPPERS Request Night with the Wyld Stallionz THE ROOST Flamingo Bingo

with DJ Janny; 8-midnight; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member) SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Tapa Tuesday:

Kevin Wong SEEDY'S Tuesday Nights with Dj Miss Mannered

popular house beats with DJ

VICTORY LOUNGE Liberation Tuesdays: emo, screamo,

PARTY NO SERVICE IN OVE BRAUHAUS Reggae, ska

Hardcore, punk rock, metal.

Leithal, DJ Liam Harvey Oswald

classics and more with D)

LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Open mic; 8pm

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE 20ftlenech

COWBOYS Theory of a Deadman, Tin Foil Phoenix, Driver; 7pm (Door); no minors; tickets available at **TicketMaster**

O'BYRNE'S Chris Wynters and friends; 9:30pm

ELEASABITYTEW HALL Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society bluegrass jam; 7:30pm

POPULARIA PLANT underCOVERband (old/new rock/soul/reggae), Guy Smith and the Revtones (urban folk, pop, western roots); 7pm (door), 8pm (music); \$5

(unwaged/student)/\$6 (door)

BOSSDALE COMPRESITY HALL Little Flower open stage hosted by Brian Gregg; 8pm

SEEDY'S King Muskafa, Sheena

(adv)/\$3

SIDETRACK CAFÉ A Northern Chorus, The Fine Options, Woolly Mammoth; 8pm; \$7 (door)

STARLITE ROOM Horrorpops, The Daggers, guests; all ages event; 6pm (door), 7pm (show); \$15; tickets available at TicketMaster, Victory Lounge, Blackbyrd, Freecloud, Megatunes, Listen and ES

CLASSICAL

CONVOCATION HALL Eileen Kim (piano); 8pm; free

BACKROOM VODKA BAR Wild Cherry: Deep house/progressive/breaks with Tripswitch

MILACK DOC FREEDSOUSE Glitter Gulch with DJ Buster friendly; no cover

and guests

ALLEDY'S ENCHICELIB Punk rock, electroshock with D)

Eddy Toonflash FILTHY McNASTY'S Mix Tape Bar Star College Nite with DI

Rock 'n' Rogers LEGENDS PUB Hip-Hop/R&B

with DJ Spincycle

LE GLOBE DJ Moreno

HEW CITY LIEWID LOUISE Gong Show: Glam, rock 'n' roll, metal with Skinny |

POWER PLANT Wildside Wednesdays: Heavy metal with Metal John

RED STAR Funk 'n' Soul-Funk, disco, soul with Junior EMONWAY!

THE ROOST Amateur Strip: Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky with DJ Alvaro; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SEEDY'S D) night

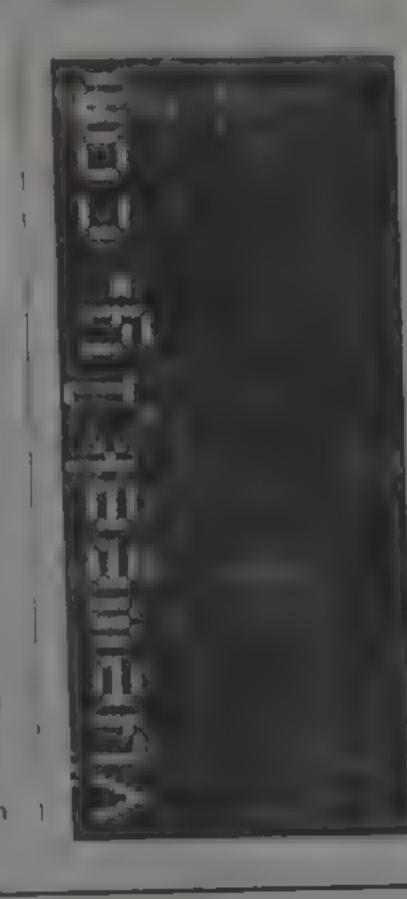
SIDETRACK CAFÉ Revolving | Mystery with guest D]

STANDARD Wednesday Gone Wild Feat with DJ Nestor Delano

STOLLI'S ON WHYTE Blue Velvet: Urban electronica with Derelict and Soulus

VICTORY LOUNGE Retro rock with the Juggemaul

BAIRNIERBAR BOR BRAUHAUS Hardcore DJs



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481-2786 LONGRIDERS 11733-78 St.

479-7488 MANHATTAN CLUB 10345-105 St, 484-2211

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Jasper Ave, 421-8523 NEWCASTLE PUB 6108-90 Ave, 490-1999

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE 10081 Jasper Ave, 413-4578 NEW CITY SUBURBS 10081 Jasper Ave, downstairs, 413-4578

414-6766 ONE ON WHYTE 10544-82 Ave, 437-7699

O'BYRNE'S 10616-82 Ave,

PEPPERS Westmount Centre, St. Albert Trail, 111 Ave, 451-

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426-3150 ROSEBOWL 10111-117 St. 482-2589

THE ROOST 10345-104 St.

Ave, 429-3624 RUM JUNGLE 2687, 8882-170 St. 4886-9494

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B170-50 St, 469-3399

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STARLITE ROOM 10030-102

St. 451-8000 STOLLI'S ON WHYTE 201, 10368-82 Ave, 437-2293

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UNION HALL Argyil, 99 St, 702-0318 URBAN LOUNGE 8111-105 St

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12416-132 Ave, 451-5506

St (downstairs), 428-1099

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WINDERBAR HOF-BRAUHAUS 8120-101 St. 436-2/2/8/6





Your Music Destination

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APR 28, 2005

- 1. Mary Gauthier Mercy Now (lost highway)
- 2. Jack Johnson In Between Dreams (brushfire)
- 3. Bloc Party Silent Alarm (vice)
- 4. Mars Volta Frances The Mute (universal)
- 5. M.I.A. Arular (xd)
- 6. Choke Slow Fade or: How I learned To Question Infinity (smallman)
- 7. Beck Guero (interscope)
- 8. Queens Of The Stone Age Lullabies To Paralyze (interscope)
- 9. lan Tyson Songs From The Gravel Road (stony plain)
- 10. Roots Manuva Awfully Deep (big dada)
- 11. Kathleen Edwards Back To Me (maple)
- 12. Bright Eyes I'm Wide Awake It's Morning (saddle creek)
- 13. Magnolia Electric Co What Comes After The Blues (secretly canadian)
- 14. Blue Rodeo Are You Ready (warner)
- 15. Martha Wainwright Wartha Warnwright (maple)
- 16. Mark Birtles Project urgency! urgency! emergency! (rectangle)
- 17. Regina Soektor Sowiet Kitsch (sire)
- 18. LCD Soundsystem LCD Soundsystem (dfa)
- 19. Damien Jurado On My Way To Absence (secretly canadian)
- 20. Millencolin Kingwood (burning heart)
- 21. Iron & Wine Women King (sub pop)
- 22. Louis XIV The Best Little Secrets Are Kept (atlantic)
- 23. The Kills No Wow (rough trade)
- 24. Bright Eyes Digital Ash In A Digital Um (saddle creek)
- 25. Arcade Fire Funeral (merge)
- 26. Antony & The Johnsons I Am A Bird Now (secretty canadian)
- 27. Sandro Dominelli Meet Me In The Ally (second story)
- 28. Colin Linden Southern Jumbo (true north)
- 29. Kings Of Leon Aha Shake Heartbreak (rca)
- 30. Billy Cowsill Live From The Crystal Ballroom (indelible)

It hasn't been that long since we heard from rock n' roll genius John Spencer but he's back with a new collaboration with pal Matt Verda-Ray and they've decided to call themselves Heavy Trash. This album is a serious ass kicker and for those of you who don't believe me open your ears and bend over... or just bend over.

10355 Whyte Ave. Shop online at megatunes.com 434-6342

Top of the Pops

Fun-loving HorrorPops say, "If it doesn't make us laugh, we won't play it"

BY PHIL DUPERRON

hile Canadian bands often dream of touring Europe, with its open-minded audiences and shorter distances between gigs, the Old World isn't all it's cracked up to be. At least, that's the word from Patricia, lead singer and upright-bass slapper for the rock 'n' roll sextet HorrorPops, who left

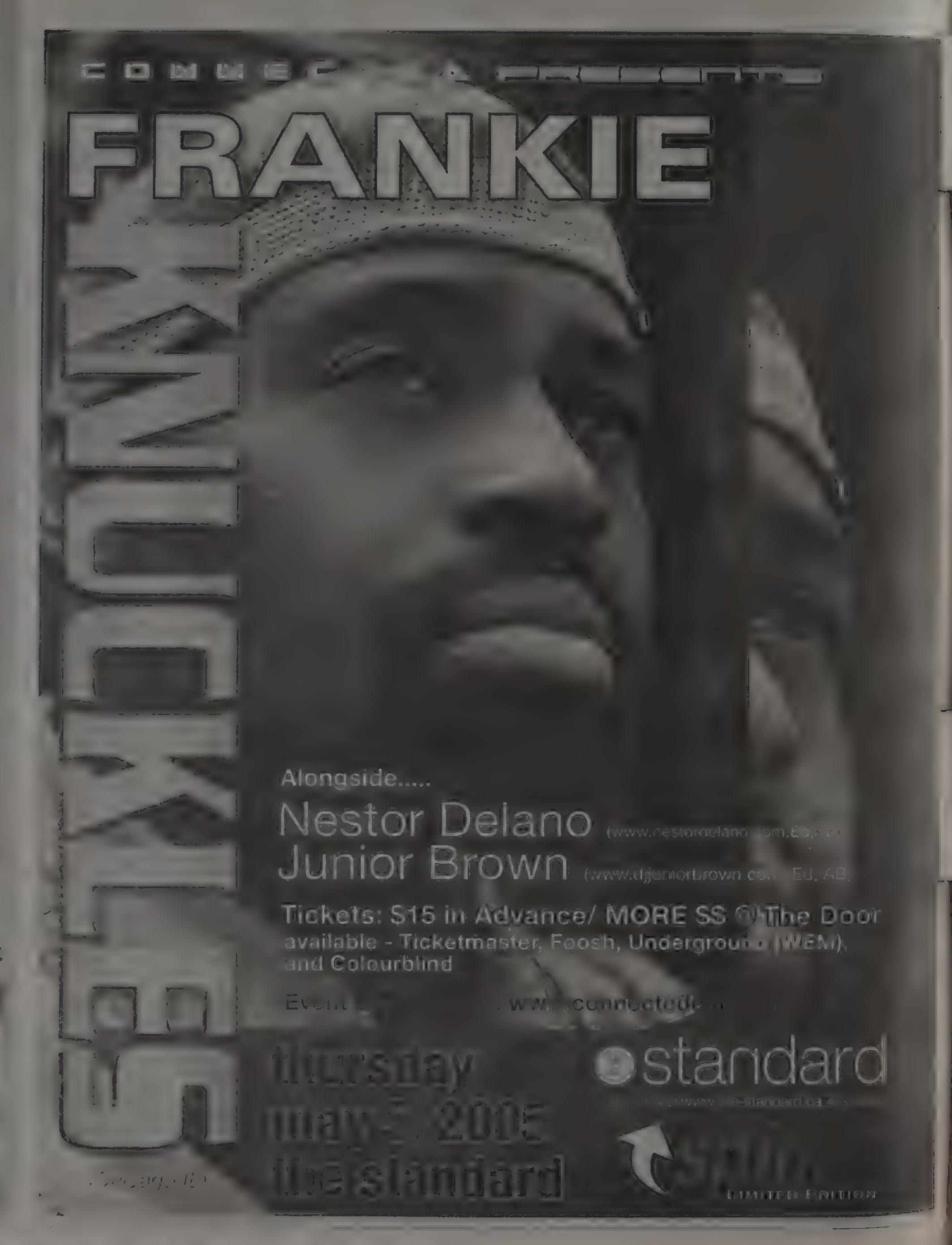
their native Denmark for the sunsoaked beaches and infamous nightlife of Los Angeles more than a year ago because the scene at home was dragging them down.

"Let me put it like this," she says. "In Denmark, there's five million people and there are three rock venues. It's the fucking Third World country of rock 'n' rollers—there's nothing there. I love Denmark, I



love Europe, but I must admit the weather here is much better too. I mean, come on—it snowed in Copenhagen 10 days ago and here I am now with shorts and no shoes."

And despite Europe's reputation as a wicked place to play, Patricia feels the rock scene is tiny compated to North America's. "We don't have rock 'n' roll except in England," she says. "We don't have rock 'n' roll radio stations; if you hear a car with its windows down, you can be 99 9 per cent sure you'll hear techno, R&R or hip hop coming out of the stereo. You won't hear rock 'n' roll-at all." As proof, Patricia points to a recent Motörhead gig in Copenhagen where only 250 people showed up; compare that to a supposed small-market city like Edmonton, who fielded 1,800 screaming Lemmy fans at Red's last week. "That's Motorhead, the kings of fucking rock," Patricia sneers "They can't muster more than 250

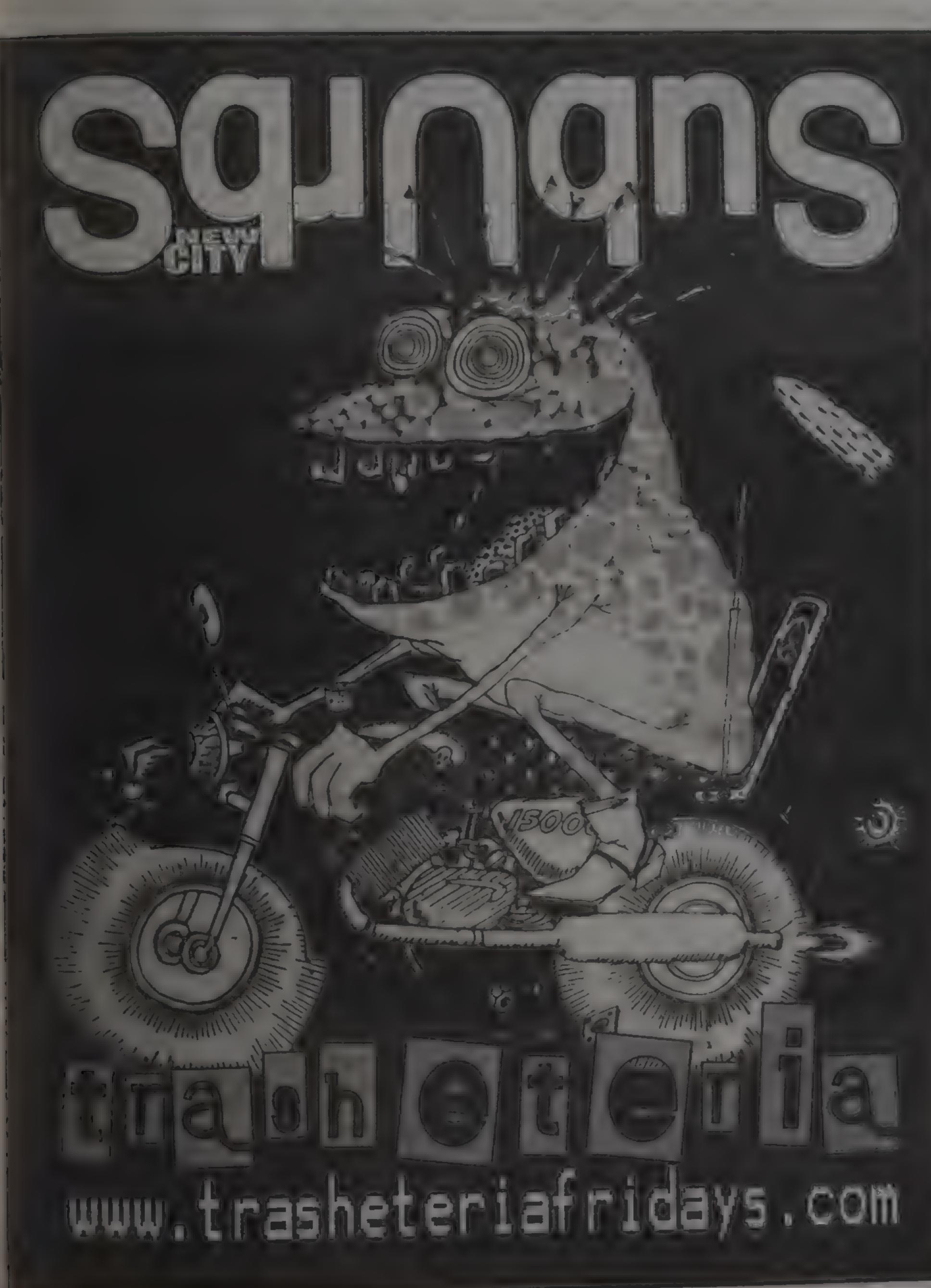


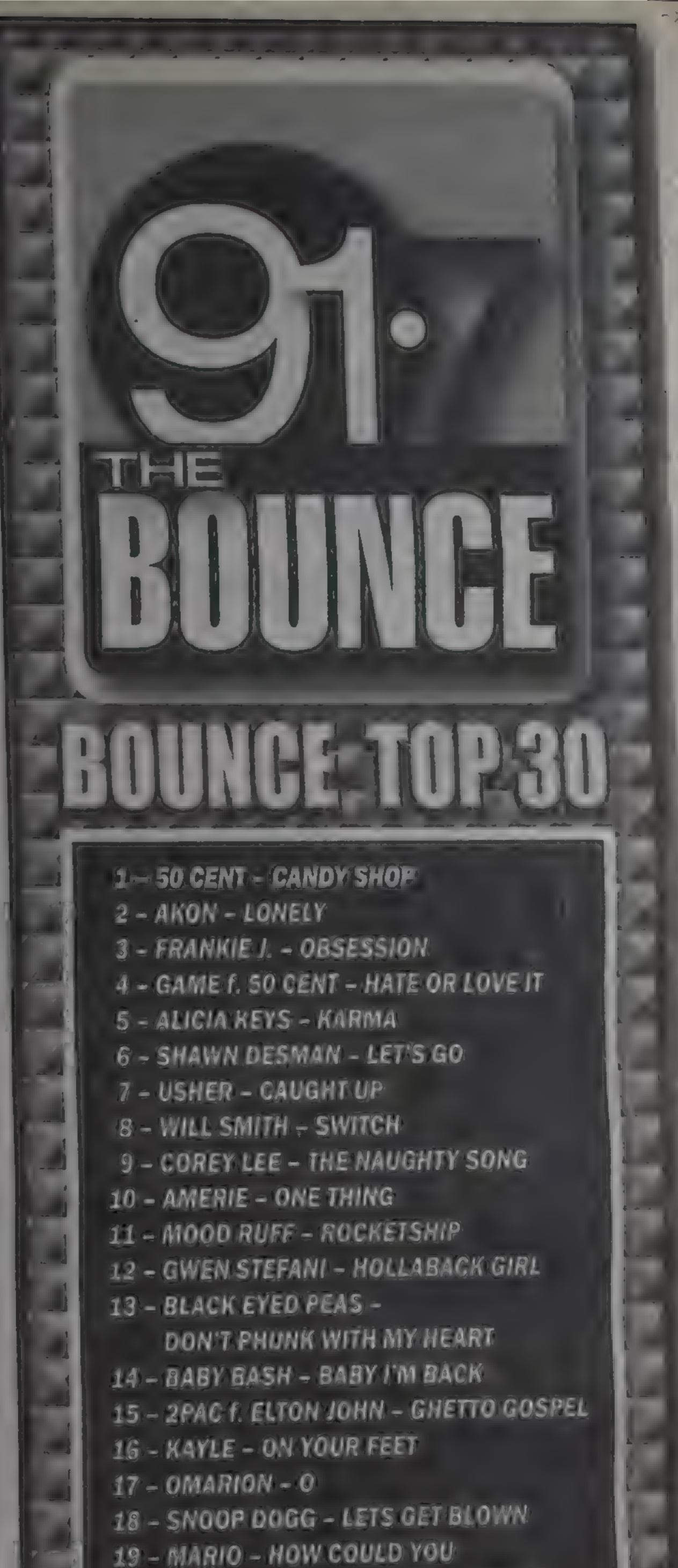
people in Denmark."

Still, if hard rock bands are losing ground to other genres, there's something unifying about being the underdog. And after more than 50 years of rock splintering into countless narrow subgenres, bands like HorrorPops are picking up the shards and jamming them back together again. "I think it's good that rock 'n' roll is suffering right now," she says. "Hip hop and R&B have taken over the world. Rock 'n' roll has all of a sudden become a subculture, and I think it thrives on it. Now all of a sudden people realize that they can't just have the privilege of saying they play this and this subgenre. There's so few of us; it's gotta be



SEE PAGE 55





20 - DIVINE BROWN - OLD SKOOL LOVE

25 - MARIAH CAREY - WE BELONG TOGETHER

27 - SWEATSHOP UNION - BROKEN RECORD

21 - DROP 4 - BETTER DAYS

24 - DESTINY'S CHILD - GIRL

30 - MAX GRAHAM VS. YES -

23 - K-05 - CRUCIAL

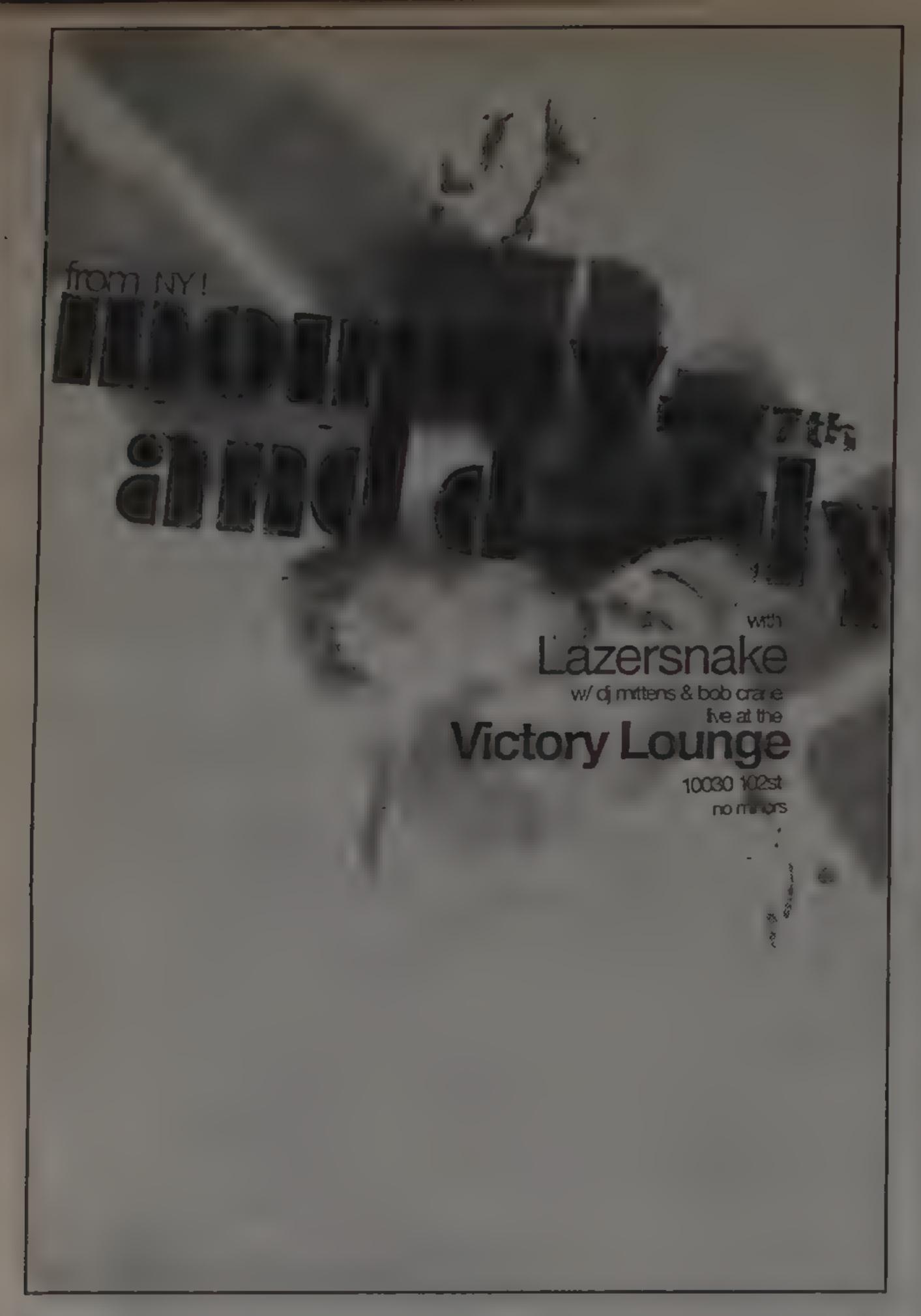
28 - CIARA - OH

22 - LUDACRIS - NUMBER 1 SPOT

26 - JULLY BLACK - STAY THE NIGHT

29 - DION TODD - NEVER SURRENDER

OWNER OF A LONELY HEART







The Rockin' Mexicans keep their true identities under their hats er, sombreros

BY DAVID BERRY

om Jones leans against the metal railing that runs around the perimeter of the downtown park where we're talking. A guitar case rests at his feet, and he wears dirty

jeans that were likely used for painting at some point in the recent

past, and a black band T-shirt, mostly obscured by the worn denim jacket, adorned with no small number of band buttons. On his head sits a sombrero.

Just below the sombrero, a pair of hornrimmed glasses and a large white bandana serve to obscure most of his face—save, of course, for a small hole, roughly in front of his mouth, from which a cigarette protrudes. He puffs on the cigarette, grasps it between his middle and ring fingers then pulls it away from his face, lifting his bandana to let the smoke escape.

"This is how you smoke like a Nazi," he says in his jaunty Manchester accent.

"Is that how the Nazis smoked?" asks his partner, also named Tom Jones, also speaking with an English twang and standing just to his right. This Tom is similarly dressed, although with much longer, more luxurious hair and smaller glasses. Nicer sombrero, too.

"Most of them, I believe,"

replies Jones the first. "I've never actually seen a Nazi, you see-only the Hollywood representation of them, really."

Together, the brothers Jones form the Rockin' Mexicans, the hardrockingest duo ever to come out of Manchester, New England. And for anyone who's never seen the pair you'd better prepare yourselves for what they bring to a live show. "] believe we bring 'it,'" explains the second, shaggier Tom Jones.

"Oh yes, we bring 'it," agrees his hornrimmed partner.

"The proverbial 'it,' not the metaphorical 'it." adds Jones II "Basically, we're sticking the prover--

bial 'it' to the metaphorical noun. And the way they do that, the pair explains, is with their rock roll style. "Well, we don't so much play our instruments as attack them really," Jones I says." It's more of a Phil Spector-ish wall of noise than anything."

"I once heard a man say, 'I don! play the drums, I hit the drums. adds Jones II. "I take inspiration from that man."

"Yes, man," Jones I says to his partner, mockingly. "Man."

"I didn't say, 'I take inspiration. from that, man," Jones II points out in his defence. "I said, 'I take insp ration from that man.' It's the emphasis."

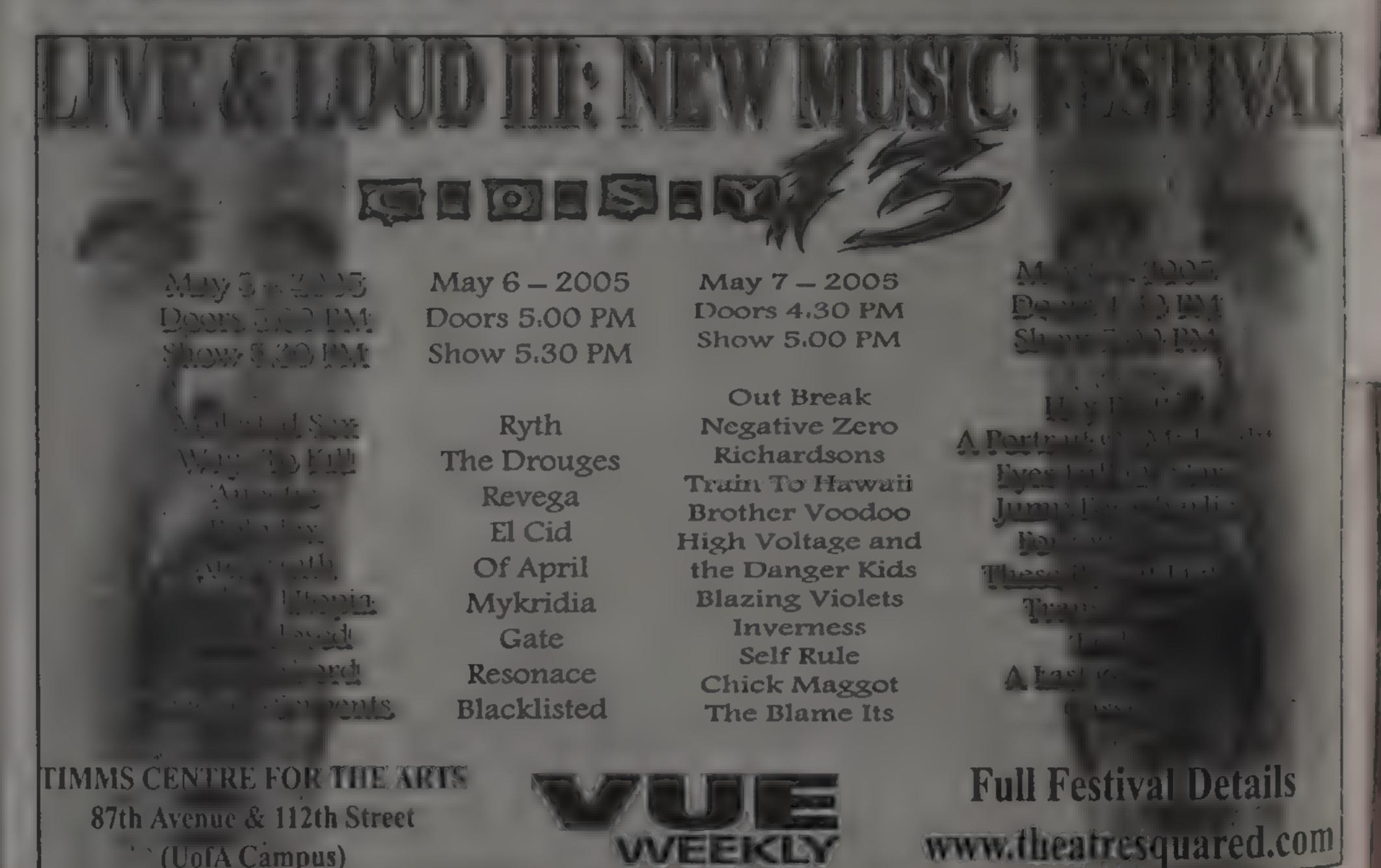
"Man."

"Man."

"Excuse me, I'm going to eat the last of that, man," says Jones I.

"That's my man," finishes Jone When they aren't engaged in heated debates on spoken grammar,

SEE NEXT PATE



(UofA Campus)

The Reckin' Mexicans

Continued from previous page

Live Mexicans tend to borrow a lot - com their influences, which are varied indeed. "We like whiskey," says Jones I, after taking another drag on his cigarette. "We like cigarettes. And rock 'n' roll in general. Rock. And roll. We play both types a music.

And though they might wear their influences on their sleeve, the sombrero-sporting duo aren't so sure that it's strictly accurate to say they play covers. "Covers-yes, well, we've been known to pay homage to our masters, so if that's what you call a cover, I guess, then, yes," says lones I, taking another long drag of his cigarette before flicking it to the ground. "It's all originally covers, if you will, in the parlance of our time. We take the spirit, then, essentially, we steal from that spirit."

"Yes, essentially, we're thieves," adds Jones II.

"Yes, it's rock 'n' roll thievery," says Jones I before breaking out into a haughty, throaty laugh.

"Yes, quite, quite," says Jones II before joining his partner in his peals of proud British laughter.

It was that type of rock 'n' roll thievery that got the duo in some trouble, and almost—undoubtedly much to the chagrin of the throngs of loyal Edmonton supporters—had them cancel their Edmonton gig.

"Our 'green cards,' as they say in the parlance of our times," says Jones I, adjusting his spectacles. "Yes, our green cards were revoked."

explains. "There are all these rules

where if you play those types of

music you can't play something else,

and we just wanted to do a band

where we could play all types of

music—the main rule was 'We'll play

whatever we want as long as it's fun.

If it's not fun, if it doesn't make us

lineup to include a second guitarist

and a couple of gory go-go dancers.

Hell Yeah!, their 2004 full-length debut

on Hellcat Records, owes as much to

'80s pop as it does to the buzz and

rumble of psychobilly, and its only

uniting factors are Patricia's powerful

HorrorPops soon expanded their

laugh, fuck it, we won't play it."

"It's more of a puce, I'd say," points out Jones II.

"Puce? Well, it's really a taupe. So, our taupe cards were revoked, and there's been issues, you might say."

Neither Jones is willing to say just what those issues actually were, but they were obviously serious enough to make the group point out that this might be your last chance to see the dynamic duo.

"Well, probably not, but you should check it out, because it might be your last chance," says Jones II.

"Though, really, any show could be the last show for the Rockin' Mexicans," adds Jones I, with a laugh. "Yes. Quite." 🛛

> THE ROCKIN' MEXICANS With the Wet Secrets and Junior

Pantherz • New City • Thu, May 5

'n' roll should be so goddamned serious," she says. "That came with the '90s and grunge. Before that, rock 'n' roll was about having fun, partying. Then all of a sudden it's all this 'My mom hates me' stuff, and that was just not for HorrorPops.

"And I miss seeing sexy bands," she continues. "I mean, come on-I like Radiohead, but goddammit, they're not pretty to look at. I miss bands like Guns 'n' Roses; they were pretty. Or Mötley Crüe were-underlined—pretty. I miss that—the fun part, not the ordinary person, ordinary life, depressing part." O

HORRORPOPI



Continued from page 53

just rock 'n' roll."

IN FACT, the HorrorPops originally came together as a trio in 1996 as a way for Patricia, guitarist Nekroman and drummer Neidermeir to explore new styles of music. At the time, Patricia was singing in an indie-rock band called Peanut Pump Gun, Nekroman was (and is still) playing his coffin-shaped bass for psychobilly sensation Nekromantix, and Neidermeir was pounding the skins for a punk band called Strawberry Slaughterhouse. "We all come from very strict subcultural backgrounds," she

voice and the band's trademark graveblack dog freehonse 10425 - Whyte With the Daggers . Starlite Room . Wed, yard humour. "The whole thing about May 4 (all ages) HorrorPops is we don't feel that rock May 4 Starlite Theatre music . DVD . more

Mea maxima Kulba

Wolfnote guitarist reflects on life as a decrepit 32-year-old amid the youthful punk scene

BY ROSS MOROZ

generally thought of as particularly old. A 32-year-old baseball player, for example, is usually thought to be in his prime, and a 32-year-old doctor is practically a young pup. But in the local punk scene, with its allages shows packed with teenaged fanboys dropped off by their minivan-driving soccer moms, 32 is prac-

tically ancient. Still, Wolfnote guitarist Bryan Kulba isn't letting his impending 32nd birthday (which, coincidentally, falls on the same date as the Wolfnote's upcoming gig opening for Cursed) get him down too much.

"If you look at the all-ages scene, the average age is probably hovering around 17 or 18," admits Kulba, who is older than some of the members of



his own band by a good decade. "I identify with younger people more than I identify with people my age. I think kids are incredibly positive and optimistic, and I'd rather associate with people who have some energy.

When you go to a bar to see a band, you don't see people getting very excited. But at an all-ages show, the kids just go crazy."

All-ages shows have been the Wolfnote's bread and butter since they formed roughly four years ago. And while the band does play the odd "no minors" engagement, they far prefer the excitement and energy of the city's thriving all-ages scene, an environment Kulba is somewhat of an expert on, having been involved the community for almost as long as the Wolfnote's youngest fans have been alive. "The scene continues to surprise me, in its highs and its lows," Kulba reports. "There's a lot of kids going to shows and starting bands and that's awesome, although sometimes I'm sort of dis-

appointed because there's more to punk rock than fashion. There's more to having a band than drink-

ing and chicks."

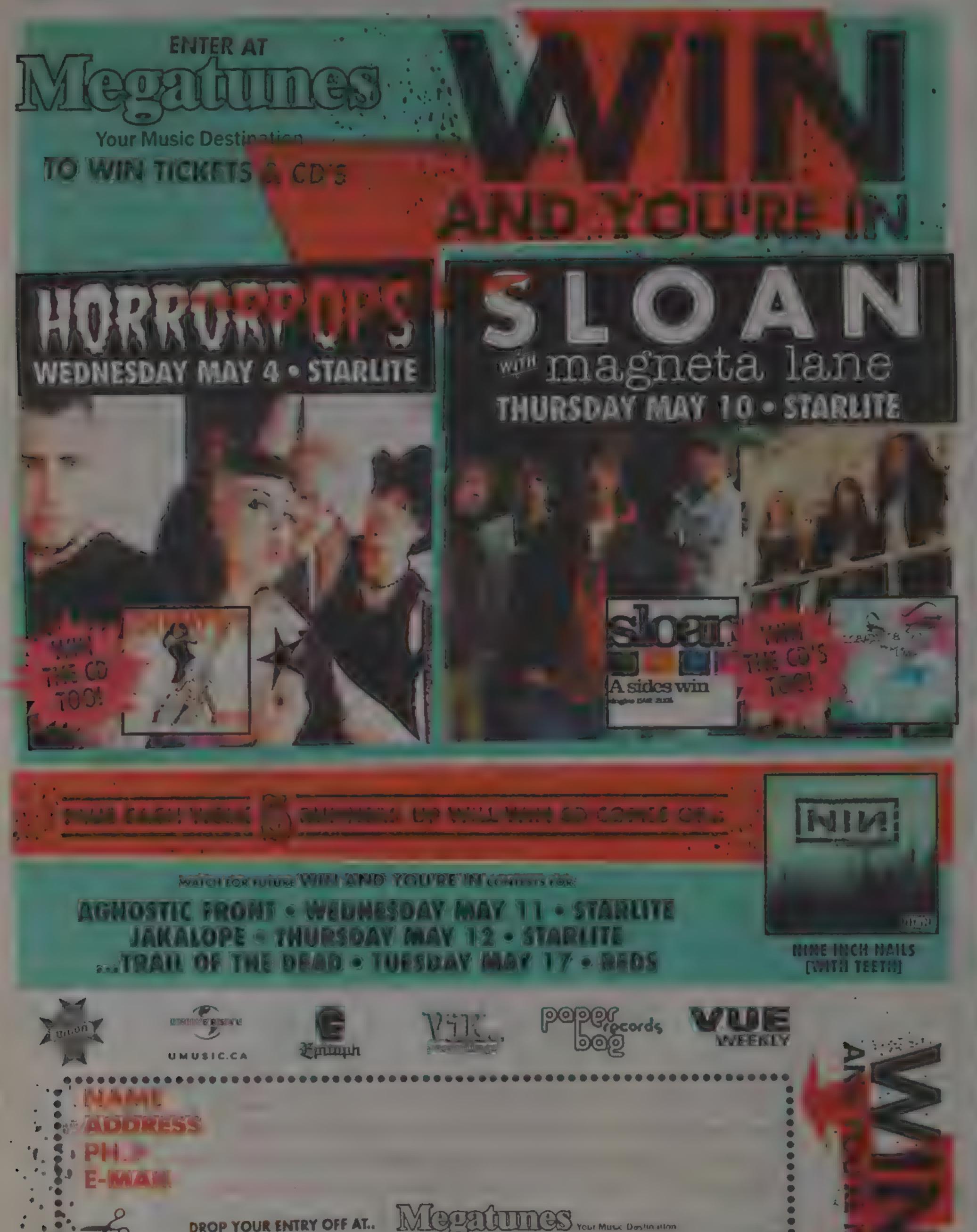
Kulba emits a sardonic laugh.
"That being said," he continues,
"you can't allow yourself to deprive
people of a positive experience. If
someone comes into this scene with
the wrong idea and they leave with a
little more than they came in with,
that's a positive thing. I guess I hope
that when people 'grow out' of this
or whatever that they take something out of it."

Most punk kids might "outgrow" the scene, but Kulba has managed to hold down a job, own his own home, start his own recording studio (in addition to being the Wolfnote's home studio, Kulba's "Kobot Labs"

has recorded albums by locals like totheteeth/tothehilt and Mark Bir. tles Project) and generally be a suc. cessful grown-up while still rocking out harder than most kids. "In all honesty," he says, "being a little older and having a little money to spend here and there, I think, makes it a lot easier. I can't imagine being in this band when I was 21 or 22. because at that point in my life I was totally broke and all that stuff, but now that I'm a little older and wiser I can pull it off. I've sort of built my life around doing things I wanted to do, and it works out just fine." O

THE WOLFNOID

With Cursed, Mare, Les Tabernacles and the Johnsons • Queen Alexandra Hall • Fri, Apr 29









BY STEVEN SANDOR

THIS WEEK: Lane Arndt discusses Kiss's Destroyer

in 1976, a kindergarten classmate introduced a five-year-old Lane Arndt to the music of Kiss. And according to Arndt, he was instantly hooked on the rock 'n' roll theatrics of the world's most over-the-top band.

Soon after that first listening session, Arndt got his own copy of Arndt now makes as a solo artist and with AA Sound System sounds nothing like the early metal of Kiss, he names Destroyer as the record which had the greatest impact on his decision to play and teach music for a living.

Arndt recalls being absolutely obsessed by all things Kiss until he was 10 years old; he remembers playing the ecords on his parents' console system or on his Battle of the Planets record player. "As a five-year-old, I took them at a literal level. A five-year-old is not going to Ace Frehley on a rocket in space. When the band played 'Love Gun,' I saw a gun shooting out love rays. I was transfixed."

Today, Arndt is a sonic experimenter; his avant-garde solo work (you can check it out when he plays with On-Cord Ensemble at the Yardbird Suite on May 6) marries his love of electronic experimentation to acoustic instruments. He has worked with a myriad of local performers, from Old Reliable to Krista Hartman, and with AA Sound System, he's reconnecting with the beauty of roots music.

Arndt's record collection is diverse to the point where he can talk about Pat Metheny noise-rock and free jazz with ease. Today, he no longer owns Destroyer, but he won't deny the indelible mark they left on his tastes. Even though I didn't realize it at the time, Destroyer was a concept album. It was dark. When I had to choose which Kiss album I wanted to listen to, I knew that I had to prepare to Destroyer. And even though the music listen to Destroyer. I had to ask myself, 'Am I prepared for the dark world I am going to have to enter?"

Arndt says the album's first three songs, including the classic leadoff track "Detroit Rock City" and Gene Simmons's epic "God of Thunder," evoked images of heavy-metal darkness, only to have that mood dispelled by the uplifting fourth track, "Great Expectations." The album moves from darkness to hopeful rock, finally moving to the arena-beckoning strains of "Flaming Youth" and "Shout It Out

power ballad of all time. "What can you say about 'Beth'?" Arndt asks. "I think it set up the idea that if you are going to be a rock star, if you are going to go out on the road, you are going to have trouble in your relationship."

What impressed Arndt is how Kiss's chords were not as important as those catchy melodic hooks and the tonality of the songs. The importance Kiss placed on melody wasn't lost on him:

"No matter how experimental or angular or esoteric," he says, "I've always been fundamentally drawn back to the simple, melodic hook."

Arndt believes a lot of bands today could learn lessons from Kiss, who would record two albums a year. "Now, it takes some bands three or five years between albums," he says. "If you're doing it fulltime, it's not that hard to write a song. And you only have to come up with 40

or 50 minutes of material."

Arndt was so dedicated to Kiss that his brother actually scratched out all the songs on the Ace Frehley solo record just to keep his sibling from playing it over and over. While that level of obsession is now a thing of the past, Arndt still looks back at his Kiss childhood with great fondness and passion.

Oh, and he now gets all the sexual innuendoes, thank you very much. O







- 1) IL DIVO
- 2) JANN ARDEN
- 3) ROB THOMAS SOMETHING TO BE
- IN BETWEEN DREAMS
- 5) BECK GUERO

BABY

- ARE YOU READY
- 7) GARBAGE BLEED LIKE ME
- 8) MICHAEL BUBLE
- 9) QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

LULLABIES TO PARALYZE

10) GWEN STEFANI

LOVE ANGEL MUSIC

- 1) MEET THE FOCKERS
- 2) OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 3) HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
- BOYS: SEASON 4
- 5) SIDEWAYS
- 6) THE INCREDIBLES
- 7) SPANGLISH
- B) EAGLES:

HELL FREEZES OVER

- 9) HOTEL RWANDA
- 10)AG/DC:

FAMILY JEWELS

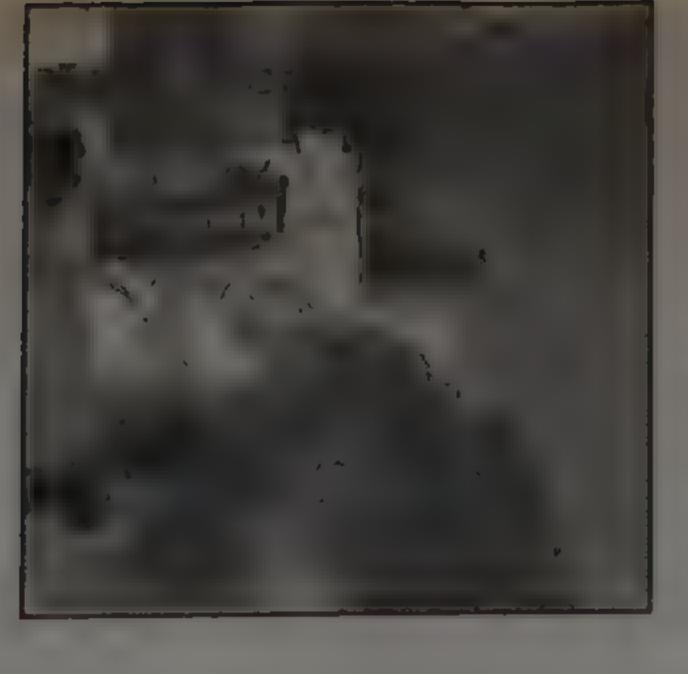
CARTBOU

THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS

(LEAF)

Caribou is the new recording identity of Canada's Dan Snaith, who released his previous two albums under the alias "Manitoba" until he found himself locking horns with aging punkrocker Handsome Dick Manitoba, who launched a bizarre copyright infringement lawsuit against him. Rather than expend his energy on a costly courtroom battle, Snaith decided simply to change his name and hope that fans would know enough to follow him from the "M" to the "C" rack at their local record store. The province of Manitoba, meanwhile, has declined to make their legal strategy public.

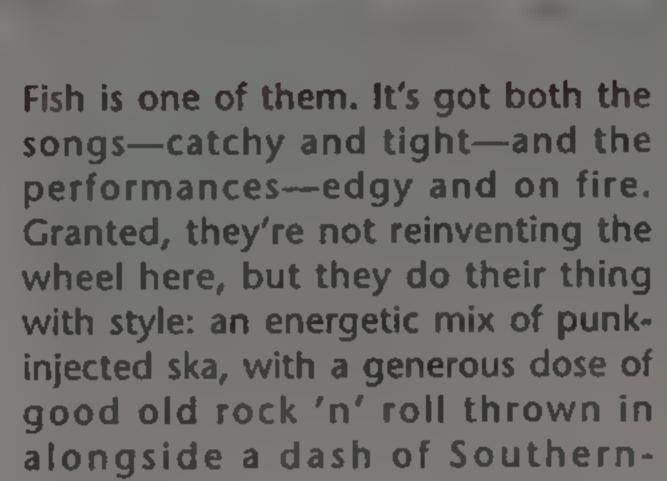
The Milk of Human Kindness has a more introspective sound than Manitoba's last album, the euphoric Up in Flames, but that's not to say the disc lacks energy or the songs are meaning far from it. Smalling some of the few electronic artists who know how to write full-bodied songs instead of



simply settling for extended, repetitive grooves. Snaith's compositions don't just surge and ebb, surge and ebb; instead, they turn unexpected corners and follow unusual emotional trajectories, from the mellow California highway groove of "Bees" to the frantic, ecstatic drumming of "Brahminy Kite" to the beautifully paced, sublimely trancelike "Barnowl." Even short segue tracks like the 30-second "Hands First" or the 90-second "Drumheller" are satisfying, completely thought-out musical ideas, not just throwaways. Dan Snaith may have lost his legal battle, but at least with The Milk of Human Kindness he's achieved a sweet artistic victory. 本本本 — PAUL MATWYCHUK

WE'RE NOT HAPPY
'TIL YOU'RE NOT HAPPY
(JIVE)

Every now and then, an album comes along that reminds you just how good music can be, and this offering from third-wave ska-punk act Reel Big



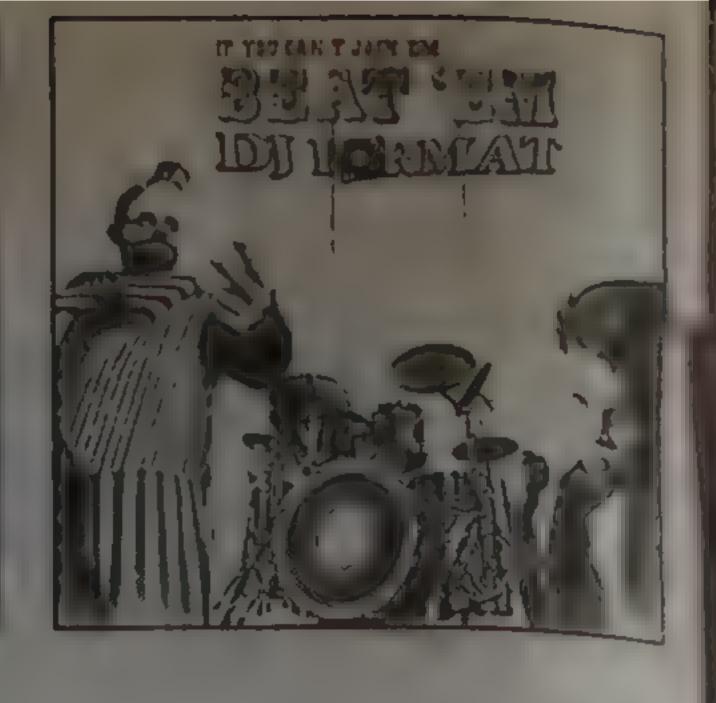
flavoured horns. The list of highlights is long: the shout-it-out-loud chorus of "Drinkin" ("If I go out drinkin' then I can stop thinkin'/About how the world's done me wrong"); the New Orleans street horns and slinky guitar riffs of "Bad Guy"; the ridiculously good reggaetinged covers of Tracy Chapman's "Talkin' 'Bout a Revolution" and Social Distortion's "Story of My Life." And just in case you start drifting off before the end of the album, they've included what has to be one of the most bizarre, nightmarish bonus tracks ever. Watch out for that one, because it comes at you from out of nowhere. Other than that little surprise, everything here is a winner. 本本本本 ---EDEN MUNRO

DJ FORMAT

IF YOU CAN'T JOIN 'EM... BEAT 'EM

(GENUINE)

A mere two years after his much-heralded debut, Music for the Mature B-Boy, Brighton-based DJ Format has returned with a record that hasn't received nearly as much hype or acclaim as its predecessor. And for good reason: it seems that Format hasn't gone anywhere with his music.



That's not to say If You Can't Join 'Em ... Beat 'Em is bad-it's catchy and certainly infinitely more listenable than a lot of rap out there—but the only thing that's changed is that Format now has a tendency to get overshadowed by his MC guests, particularly Canadian MC Abdominal, Songs like "Ugly Brothers" and "Participation Prerequisite" are nice little numbers, but their success has a lot more to do with Abdominal's increasingly clever rhymes than anything Format is doing on the turntables, which is a bit disturbing considering Format's reputation as one of the more inventive DJs to pop up in the last few years. Here he seems stuck in a very Jurassic 5-style vibe; it's catchy, but not as smart as the music on Mature. ** The -- DAVID BERRY

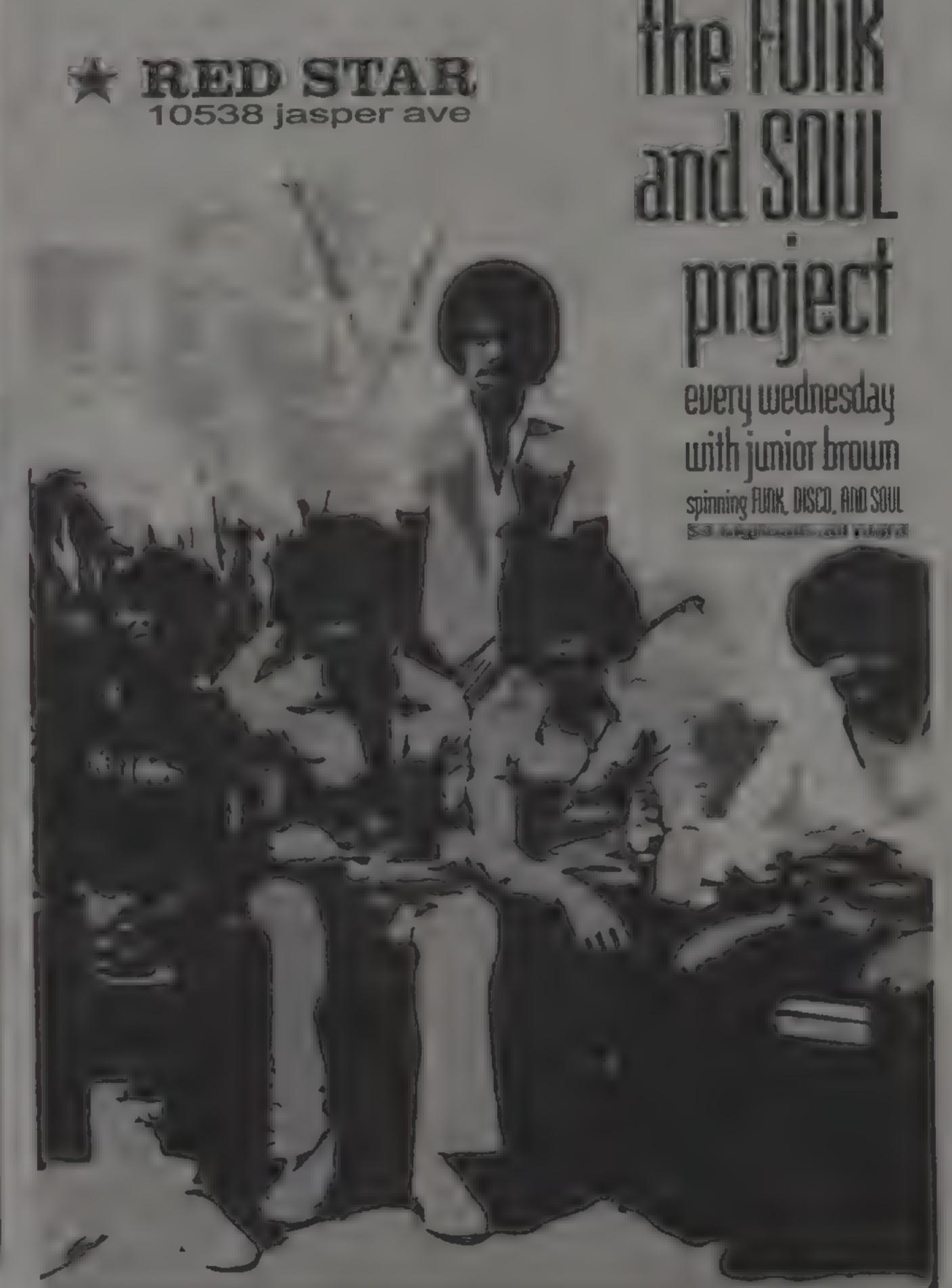
MARY GAUTHIER

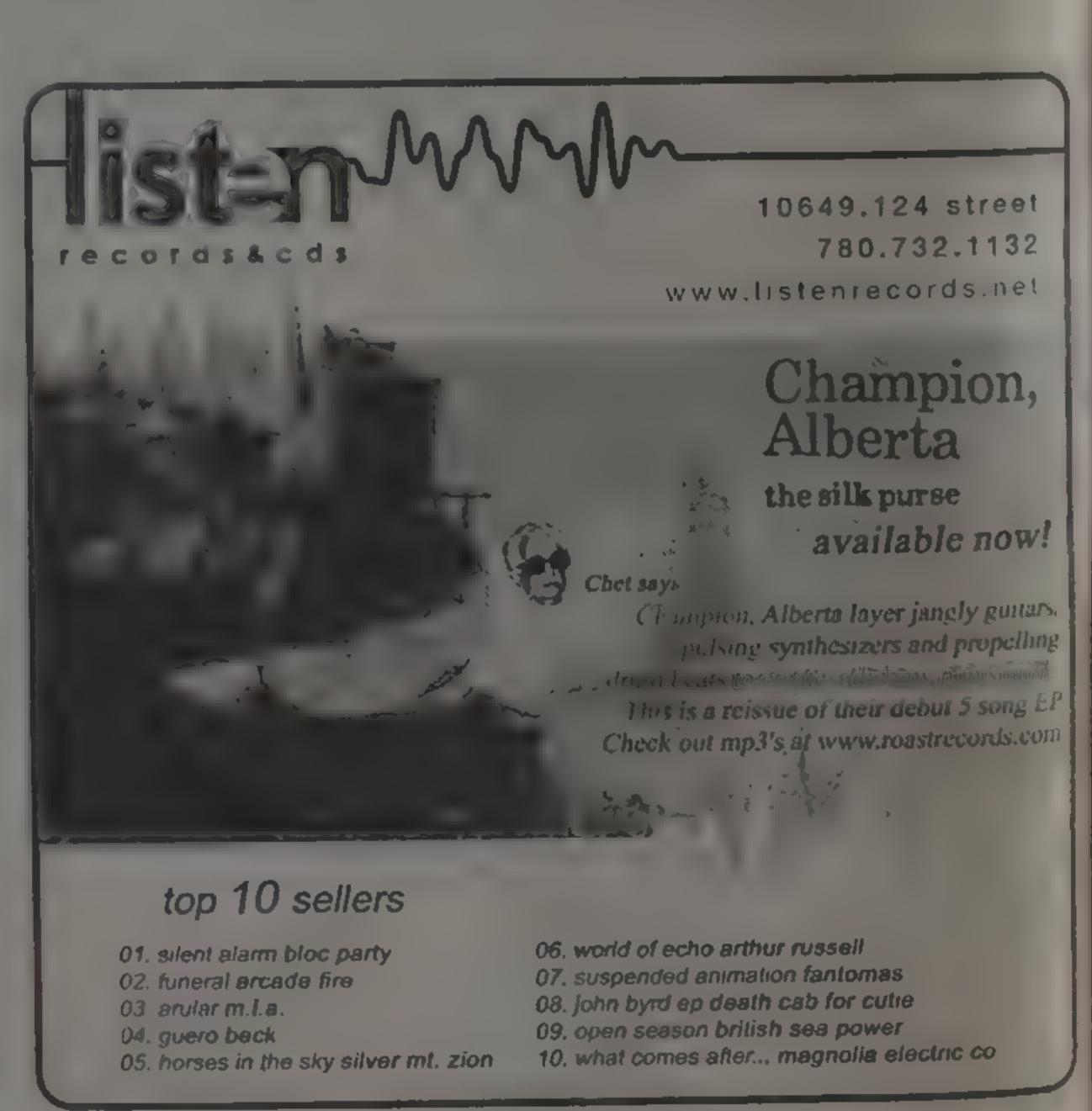
MERCY NOW

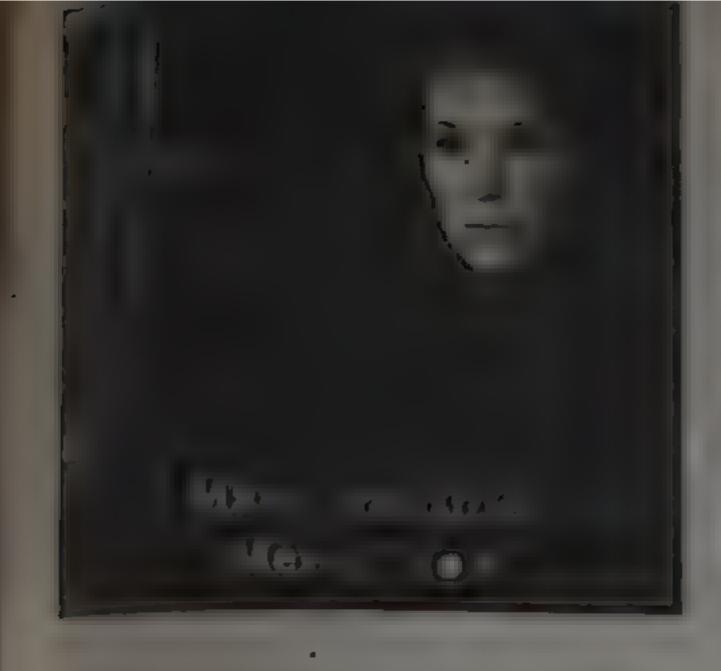
(LOST HIGHWAY)

Mary Gauthier has seen some tough times—jail, drugs and a whole lot of hurt—all leading up to her writing her first song at 35 years old. Now on her fourth album, she's still got something to say about hard living, and that desire infects every song on Mercy Now. She dredges up vivid scenes of desperation ("It's a cheap hotel, the heat pipes hiss/The bathroom's down the hall and it smells like piss") and awkward hope ("I leave town, break new ground, break down, leave town again"), inviting us into her world of sin and redemption.

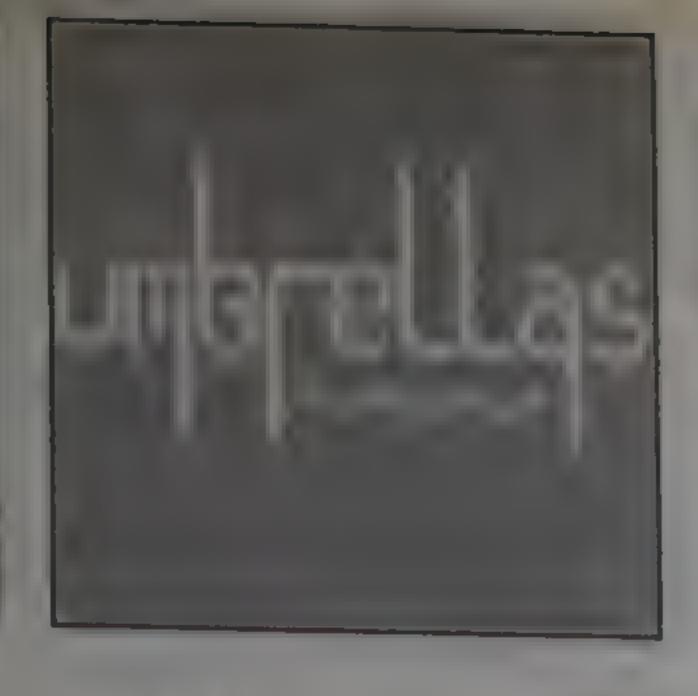
Gauthier's songs are well served by Gurf Morlix's raw, intentionally unpol











heart. * A * - PAUL MATWYCHUK

UMBRELLAS UMBRELLAS (MILITIA GROUP)

ished production. Morlix instead favours a sparse sonic quality that will be familiar to anyone familiar with his guitar playing on Lucinda Williams's Car Wheels on a Gravel Road. His stripped-down approach suits Gauthier's half-spoken delivery just fine, keeping her southern accent at the forefront of the sound, with an impressive group of musicians providing emphasis for her poetic lyrics.

Besides Morlix on guitar and bass, Ray Bonneville handles the harmonica, Patty Griffin adds her sweet vocals to a couple of songs and Ian McLagan (Faces and the Rolling Stones) works the Hammond B3 on several tracks. The song is always number one and no one overplays here, making this a solid entry in the alt-country genre. 本本文 -EDEN MUNRO

AIMEE MANN THE FORGOTTEN ARM (SUPEREGO)

Aimee Mann's latest CD is packaged ike a pulp novel from the '50s, complete with garish fonts, faux-vintage illustrations by Owen Smith and a booklet that lists the songs as "chapters" rather than tracks. As you may have guessed, we're deep in conceptalbum territory here; supposedly, the album tells the story of a boxer who comes back from Vietnam as a drug addict, and his wife, a former carnival

worker, who eventually has no other choice but to leave him.

Mann is really swinging for the fences on this one, but the disc is a big disappointment, largely because, for all her talent, Mann lacks a novelist's instinctive feeling for character and action, and she especially lacks the unpretentious energy of a pulp writer. The songs on The Forgotten Arm are almost all draggy interior monologues that speak in the same voice no matter which character's point of view they're supposed to be expressingand that voice hardly ever expresses a thought that sounds like it might have plausibly sprung from the brain of either a down-and-out boxer or his uneducated lover. ("Though the exit is crude, it saves me coming unglued for when you're not in the mood for the gloves and the canvas floor," sings the carny girl on "That's How I Knew This Story Would Break My Heart"; "I'm sorry that I made you a witness to my moral decay," replies the boxer on "I Was Thinking I Could Clean Up for Christmas.")

Mann's limited voice, her tightly woven rhyme schemes and her small, bitter ironies just don't rise to the level of emotion that this material demands. You don't get the feeling Mann is fully inhabiting these characters or this story; it's more like she's watching them through a pinhole. It's not the arm this album forgot about; it's the

Have you ever noticed how sometimes it feels like you've heard a whole album before you even make it through the first couple of tracks, and that you can almost magically anticipate each note before it's sung, each chord before it's struck? Umbrellas's self-titled debut album gave me such a curious case of déjà entendu, leaving me to scratch my head as to why they sounded so familiar.

Maybe it's the fact that the lead singer's voice kept reminding me of the guy from Zuckerbaby. Or maybe it's the overly dramatic reverb and dark, clunky piano that I couldn't help associating with Coldplay. Whatever it is, the fact that Umbrellas sounds a lot like a lot of things winds up being a mixed blessing, in that instead of considering them as a band unto themselves, I kept trying to place them in the context of other bands.

While they've got an appealing happy-to-be-sad sound, everything on their disc starts to blend together into one giant unified song by the halfway point. The disc may be full of good, well-written pop songs, but they're best consumed in small doses rather than a potentially tedious start-to-finish listen.

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AND T.B. PLAYER

Jefferson Airplane The Essential Jefferson Airplane (Legacy)

Proves my theory that What was deep in the '60s Is laughable now

Konono No. 1 Congotronics (Crammed)

Your amp got stole? Waaaah! Try making gear from car parts Like these fuckers did!

Morrissey Live at Earls Court (Attack) anddamn Morrissey! --- disc proves he's still got it and I still hate it

learlake Wonder If the Snow Will Settle Domino) art clever Britpop 'art whiny Morrissey poop

Cheer up, sullen lads

Barry Manilow The Essential Barry Manilow (Arista)

Yeah, he writes the songs The songs that make women scream And panties explode

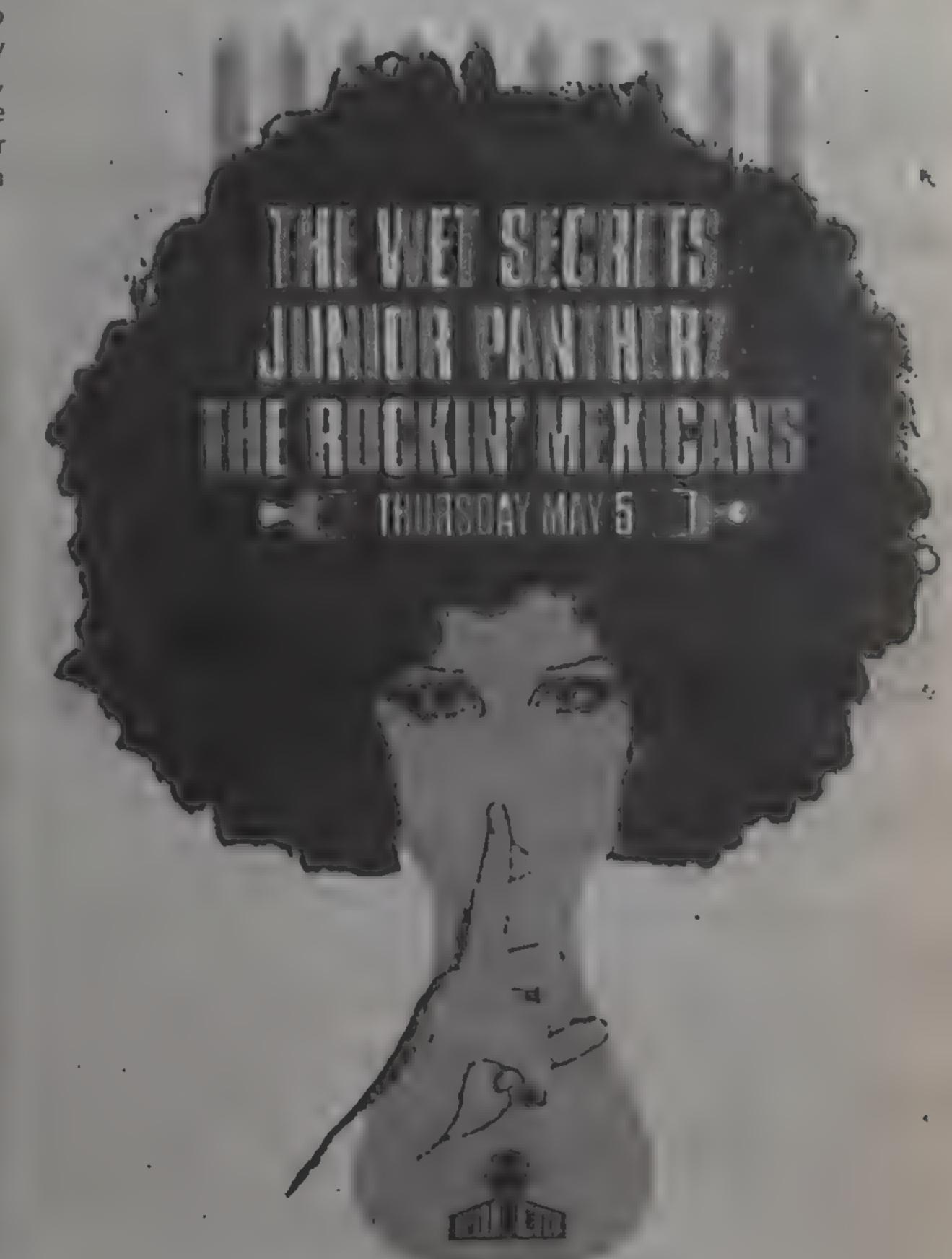
Urlis

Toujours le Même Film... (G-Stone) Stylish and sexy Great soundtrack for a night out Or gettin' nekkid

Semper Satago A Domino Compilation (Domino) Comp discs often stink.

This one is so crammed with good It makes my balls ache

· Herb Alpert Whipped Cream and Other Delights (Shout! Factory) 40 years later Sexy Herb and his minions Are still delightful



linn-cel overture

The painstakingly created shorts in The Animation Show inspire laughter, tears and sheer awe

BY DARREN ZENKO

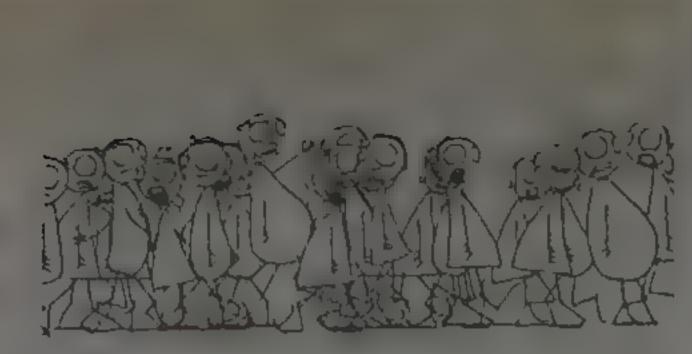
nimation anthologies are a mainstay of sidestream cinema, from NFB shorts reels through the old Spike and Mike's Sick and Twisted shows to this year's The Animation Show, presented by celmasters Mike Judge and Don Hertzfeldt, playing this weekend at Metro Cinema. The big draw—aside from the simple joy of watching a bunch of top-notch cartoons—is that they're wicked Date Pictures; there's a little comedy, a little drama, a little High Art... something for every taste, and lots to talk about over post-theatre coffee/beer/wine/whatever. There's plenty of diversity in Judge and Hertzfeldt's 2005 slate; here are some selections from the 10-film lineup.

First off, what animation anthology would be complete without a

Bill Plympton short? Answer: none; there's actually a law that says he's gotta be in there. Here, the master of mannered malleability is represented by Guard Dog, a five-minute look at the exceedingly lethal environment of a public park, seen through the eyes of an overprotective pooch. Imaginative cartoony mayhem of the expected high calibre abounds.

Jennifer Drummond, whose vivid rotoscoping (the process of basing animation on filmed footage, which made Ralph Bakshi's doomed Lord of the Rings film so damn awesome) brought Richard Linklater's Waking Life to, uh... life... does more documentary animation with F.E.D.S., a brief but powerfully vivid look at the world of Food Education Demo Specialists, those nice hairnetted folks who serve up samples at supermarket aisle-ends. Drummond's world is a pulsating, throbbing place where background pattern and colour palette are as important as line and shape in conveying meaning. Funny, a little frightening and unforgettable.

Amanda Forbis and Wendy Tilby's acclaimed 1999 NFB short When The Day Breaks takes the rotoscopic process in a different direction. By

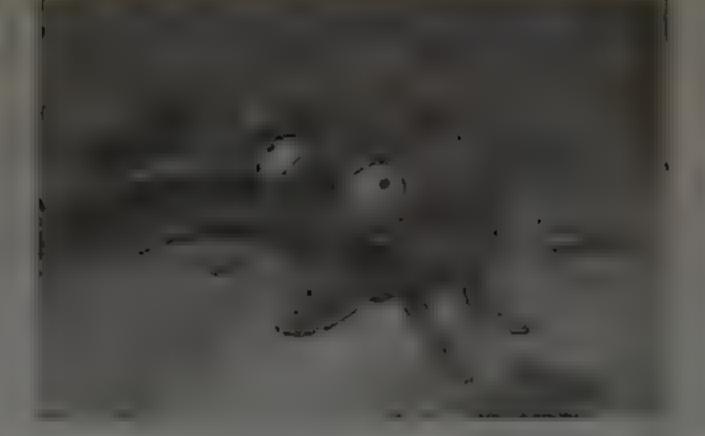


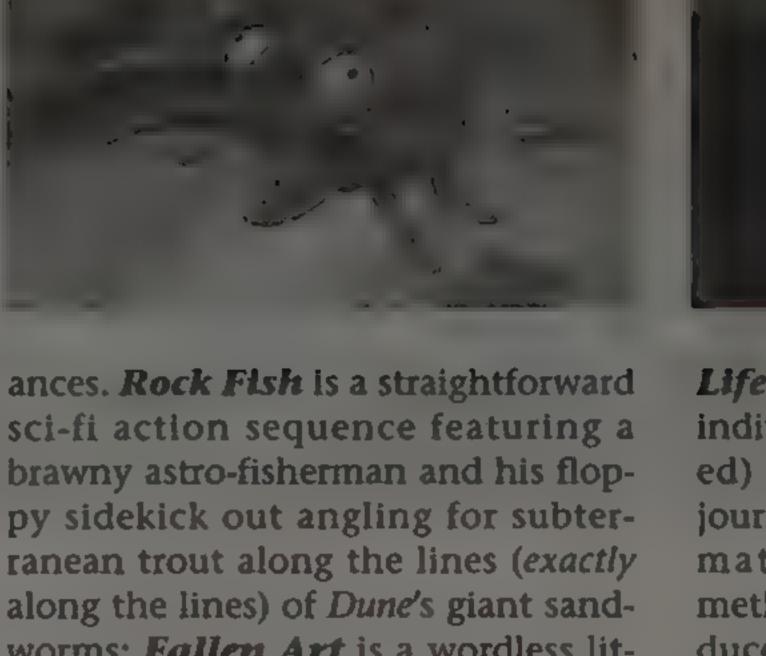
filming live actors and then converting them via pencil, pen and watercolour wash into a variety of urban-dwelling barnyard animals, the Canadian duo have created a lush, living and irresistibly charming musical thesis on the interconnectedness of city society. An all-time classic with impeccable taste and timing.

Timing—the timing of comedy, of horror, of Jackie Chan-style action-is

of the essence in Peter Cornwell's Ward 13. When a hit-and-run victim wakes up in a nightmare hospital filled with ogrish orderlies, monstrous mutants, deadly dispensaries and sadistic surgeons (can you tell I grew up reading "Stan's Soapbox"?), he must use every resource at his disposal to escape. Visual gags, moments of terror and nonstop action combine with years-in-the-making traditional clay animation, with spectacular results.

THIS BEING CENTURY 21 and all, nontraditional animation—the kind they do with those computers these days—makes a couple of appear-





Life, featuring 60 actors voicing 150 individual (and individually animat ed) characters, plus a psychedelic journey through outer space, all animated by hand, via traditional methods, with all special effects produced in camera. It took Hertzfeldt four years to come up with these 12 minutes, and he almost destroyed his health and sanity in the process Was it worth it? Kind of. The pure laugh-out-loud entertainment value of his looser, more rambunctious work ("I'm bleeding from my anus!" you had to be there) isn't there, but the pure spectacle of the will-be. famous Crowd Scene, the charm and meticulous animation of Hertzfeldt's posthuman races, and his trippedout planetarium riff (if you can call a nail-biting, all-or-nothing, in-camera effects sequence a "riff") go a long

way towards making up for it. O THE ANIMATION SHOW 2005

Curated by Mike Judge and Dor Hertzfeldt . Featuring work from Bill Plympton, Jennifer Drummond, Don Hertzfeldt, Wendy Tilby and Amando Forbis . Zeidler Hall, The Citadel . Fri-Sun, Apr 29-May 1 (7 and 9pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

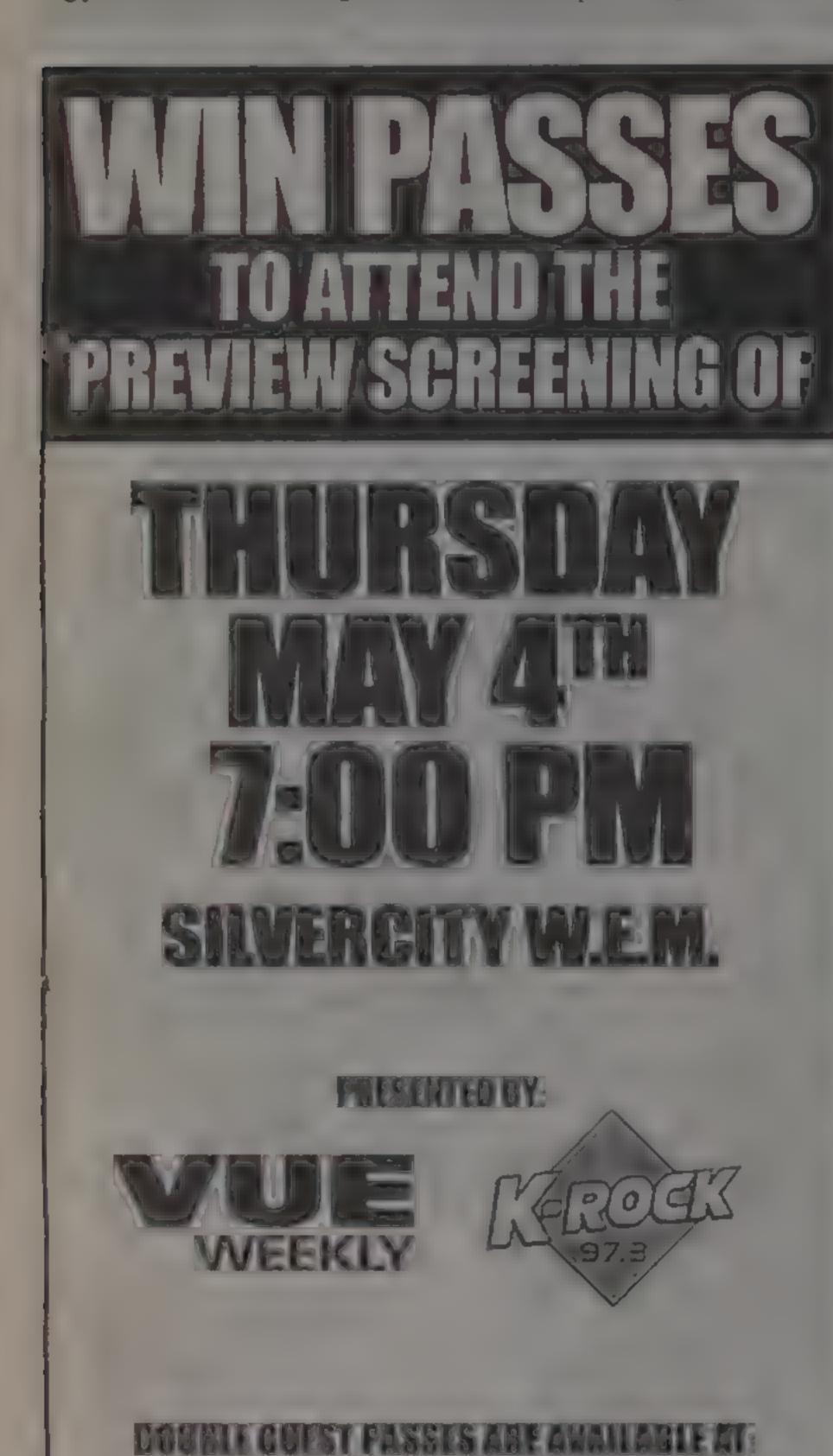
brawny astro-fisherman and his floppy sidekick out angling for subterranean trout along the lines (exactly along the lines) of Dune's giant sandworms; Fallen Art is a wordless little horror-story about a whole new medium for stop-motion animation. Of the two, Fallen Art is probably better, simply because it has ideas and goals beyond those of your average videogame cutscene or Hollywood CGI action scene, but both suffer from that all-too-common problem of computer animation: ugliness. Surfaces, skies, even individual hair follicles may be gorgeously rendered, but there's something dank at the heart of this stuff that technological dazzle only makes more obvious.

> short incorporating Robert Frost's bleak study of a heartbroken woodland god seeking a role in the modern world and finding none. I don't even want to tell you about it here for fear of lessening the impact; go see it and you'll never forget it.

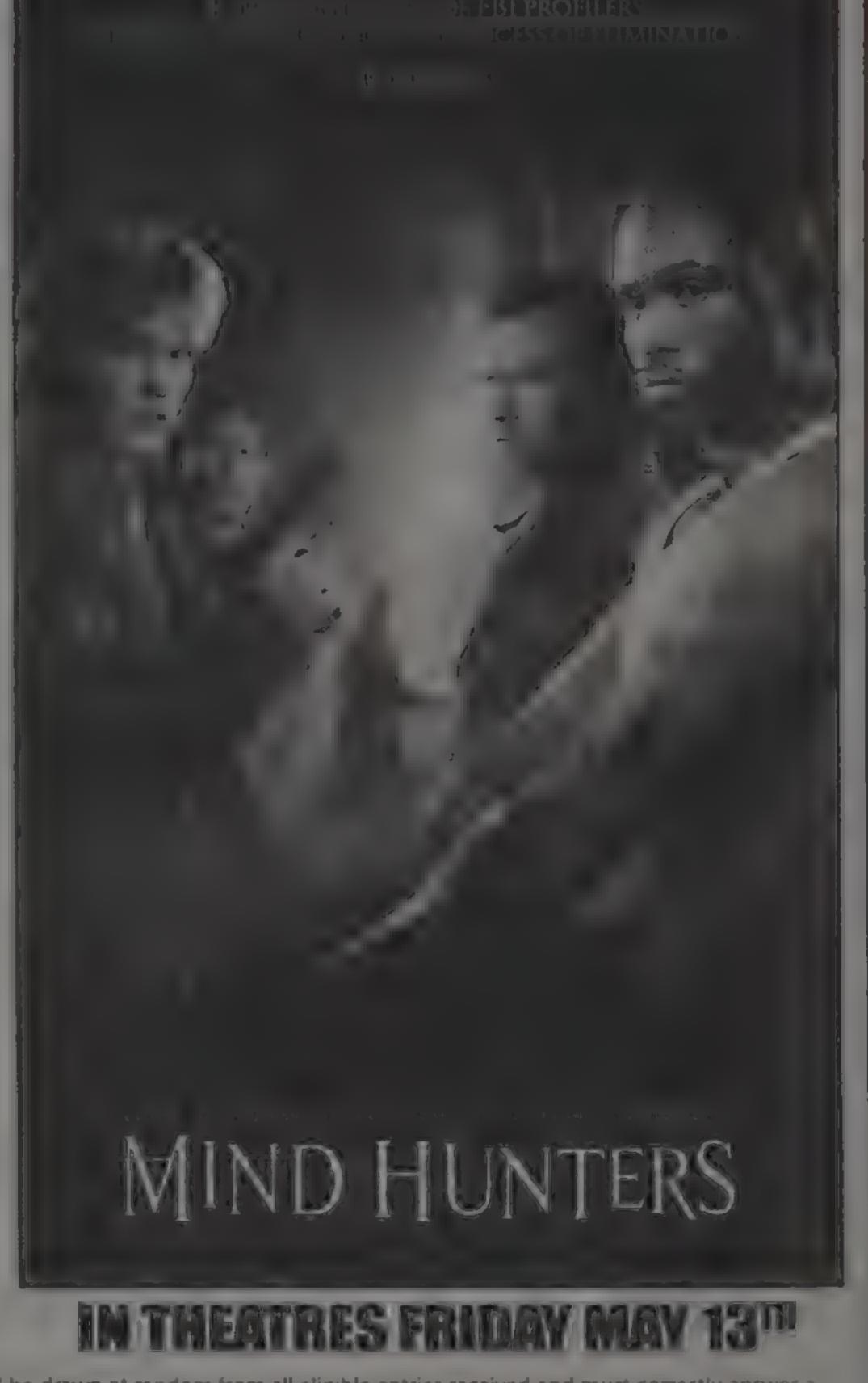
Compare these with Pan With

Us, a heart-stopping stop-motion

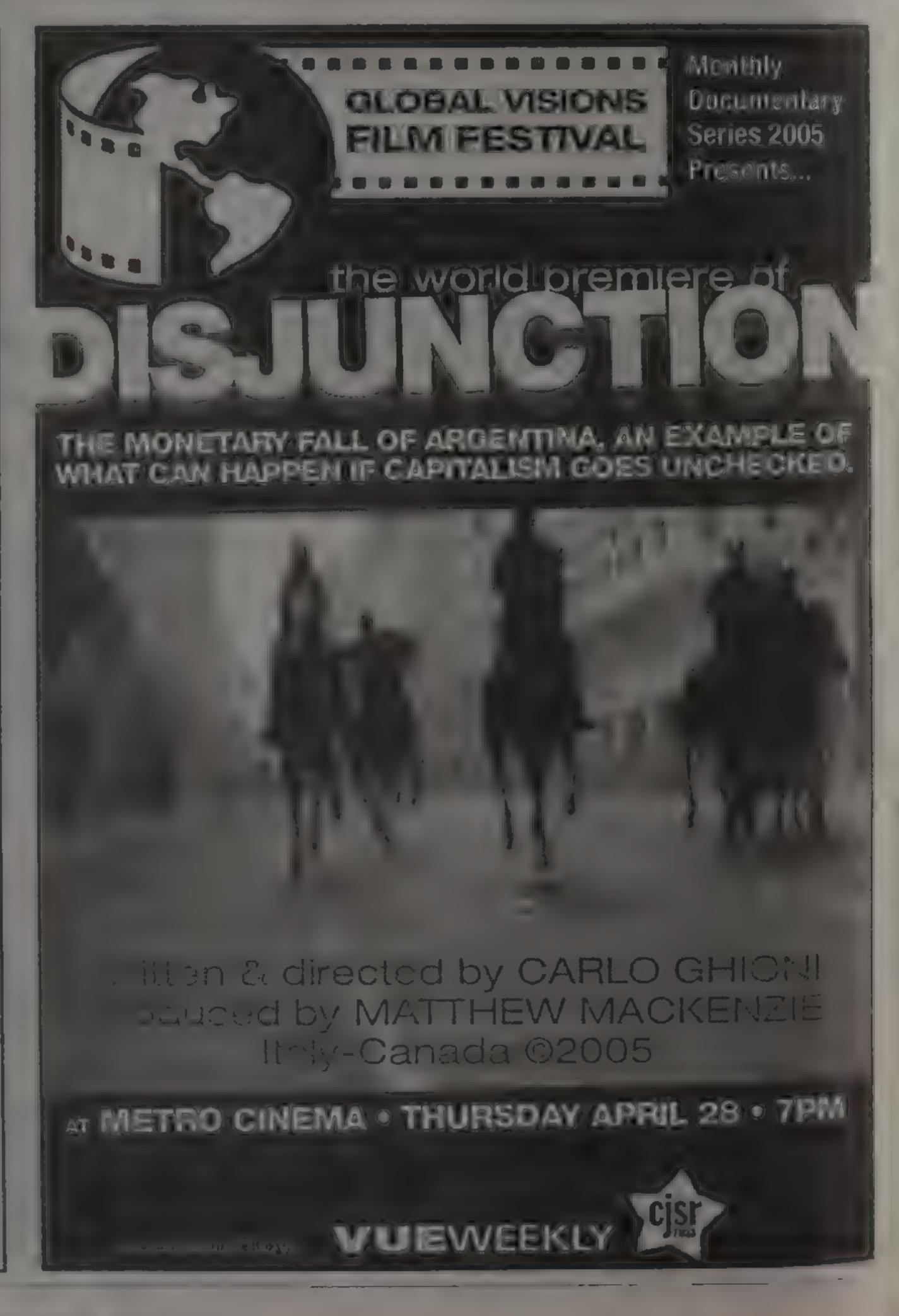
The grand finale of the show is Hertzfeldt's own The Meaning of



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cleaming the Cube

Vin Diesel in new XXX adventure, but actually the whole film is disposable

BY EDEN MUNRO

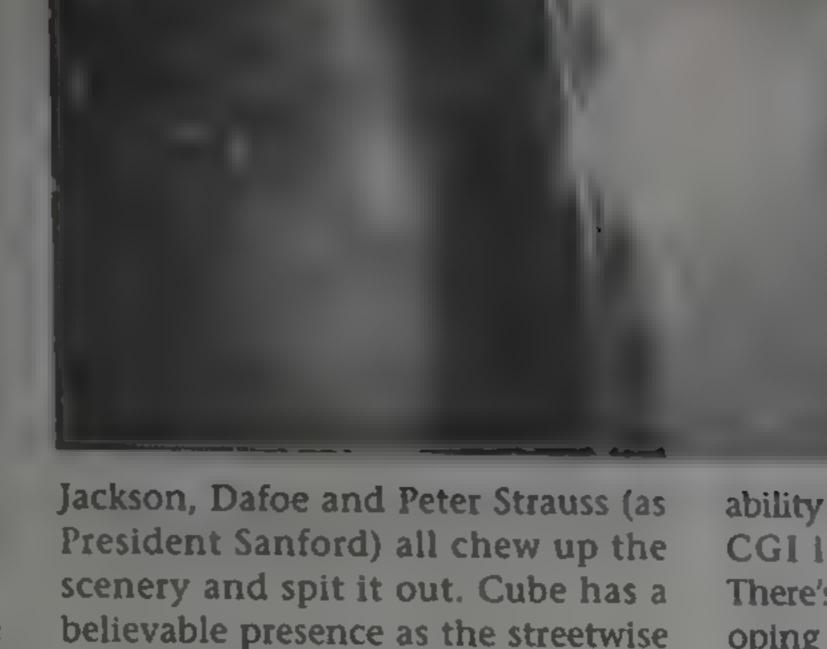
MAXX: State of the Union is a sortof sequel to XXX, the slam-bam Vin Diesel action vehicle from 2002. This time out, rapping actor Ice Cube takes the lead as the new XXX agent after Diesel stepped out of the project. Judging by this new film's ridiculously blatant set-up for yet another sequel, it looks like the filmmakers' main goal is to turn the XXX series into a franchise starring a different hotshot actor each time out. That line of reasoning haunts State of the Union, giving the proceedings an air of disposability that only increases as the film careens along.

The film gets right down to business with an attack on the secret headquarters of the National Security Agency. We know the perpetrators are some serious bad guys because they've got a truckload of space-age military technology to back up their violent tendencies—the film's body count reaches 20 after only a couple of minutes. Luckily for us, Augustus Gibbons (Samuel L. Jackson) escapes the carnage in a souped-up 1967 GTO (a holdover from the first film). Once he's back in safety, all Gibbons has to do is recruit the new XXX agent and set him loose on the baddies. No problem. A little jailbreak from a maximum-security military prison and Cube's Darius Stone is on board along-side nerdy. NSA gadget man Toby Lee

MACTION MACTION

Shavers (Michael Roof). Things move straight ahead from there as Stone uncovers a trail leading all the way up to Secretary of Defence George Deckert (Willem Dafoe). With both the FBI and Deckert's military commandos on his tail, Stone takes to the streets and recruits his buddies from the hood to help him save the day.

State of the Union starts off well in large part because it has a sense of humour about itself. The filmmakers seem to realize that they're making a big, dumb action flick and rather than cover that fact up, they do everything they can to emphasize it. There are plenty of one-liners to be had, and



President Sanford) all chew up the scenery and spit it out. Cube has a believable presence as the streetwise ex-Navy SEAL who's equally at home in battle or in the local chop shop. The soundtrack helps a lot too, especially during the prison break, where the stunts are accompanied by a thunderous update of Mission: Impossible/James Bond-style music.

UNFORTUNATELY, that sense of fun falls by the wayside in the film's second half as the one-liners give way to dialogue that ponderously spells out the lame conspiracy plot for the audience, the soundtrack becomes more interested in plugging the next single by Velvet Revolver and the action gets more and more outlandish as the filmmakers try to top each previous stunt. There's a ridiculous train sequence, for instance, that goes a long way towards proving that Hollywood's newfound

ability to do just about anything with CGI is not always a good thing. There's something to be said for developing creative solutions to the physical limitations of good old-fashioned special effects.

State of the Union works when it's moving at a breakneck pace and having fun with its limitations, but it's not so good when things slow down and get serious. If the XXX films are going to succeed as an action franchise, they

need to offer something that the James Bond films don't—either by being more entertaining or supplying a meaningful plot. Sadly, the filmmakers behind State of the Union fail on both of these missions. ©

XXX: STATE OF THE UNION

Directed by Lee Tamahori • Written by Simon Kinberg • Starring Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson, Willem Dafoe and Scott Speedman • Opens Fri, Apr 29

Hello, young lovers

Local filmmakers
devoted two years of
their lives to creating
The Greatest Love
Story Ever Told

3Y CAROLYN NIKODYM

Holywood filmmakers. Put together a manly male and a coy female celebrity, regardless of their acting ability, and the box office sings with activity. But still, the romantic comedy genre is one that many would agree is horrible.

The days of Annie Hall are gone," laments 22-year-old Mike Robertson. To remedy this situation, the University of Alberta film studies student has spent every moment of free time over the last two years working on a tongue-in-cheek version of the lomantic comedy, immodestly titled The Greatest Love Story Ever in-crime is 20-year-old theatre student Arlen Konopaki, who also plays the male lead, Rutiger.

When the three of us met for the interview, our primary-coloured retro jackets became the icebreaker. Sitting together, one in red, one in yellow, and one in blue, we looked like a grade-school colour wheel. But our mission was not to compare thrift

stores, but to discuss the problem with the romantic comedy. "They're so predictable and clichéd," Konopaki says. "They are so stale, and that's why it's so easy to spoof them."

When the pair started writing the script in the summer of 2003, they had just watched the movie Airplane!, and their goal became to create a movie that would be even funnier. They didn't originally conceive the script as a spoof on romantic comedies, but the genre did offer a basic story structure that allowed them to concentrate on the funny. Both of them are involved with the Edmonton improv scene and that background informs much of the script's

E LOCAL

farcical, anything-for-a-laugh tone.

By September 2003, the script was ready to shoot. After classes every day they would get together with the female lead, Tia Chambers, shoot a scene or two, and then edit the footage into the night. They were able to persuade Rapid Fire Theatre contacts like Chris Craddock and Kevin Gillese to do cameos, but their lack of money and street cred made it a challenge to get people excited about the project. "No payments," Konopaki says. "Nobody got jack-all. Basically, we just asked, begged and were as quick as we could with shooting so that we weren't eating people's time."

JUGGLING university classes, a film production and recording the sound-track under the band name the Corduroys, Robertson and Konopaki managed to finish most of the shooting and post-production by August 2004. While the resulting film is unmistakably a low-budget indie production, it is tightly edited and has plenty of sight gags and potty humour for the young at heart.

"It's funny to think that what we are going to be showing we wrote two years ago," Konopaki says. "It's weird. I was 18 and Mike was 20."

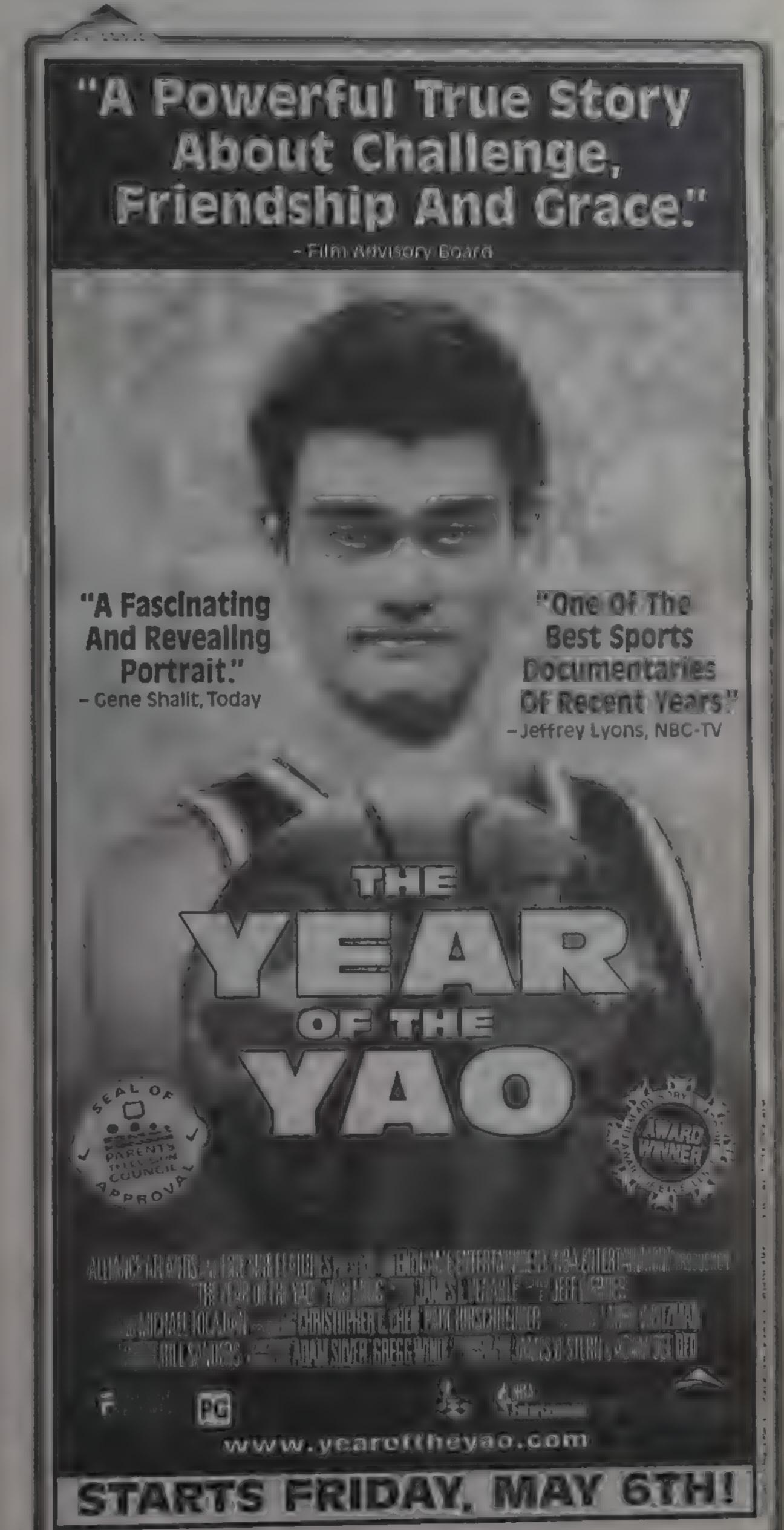
After a test screening in their hometown of Fort McMurray, Robertson and Konopaki revamped the film, removing more than an hour of footage, taking out some of the more offensive material and giving the film more heart. "There was some violence towards children—or babies, more specifically—that we cut out," says Konopaki.

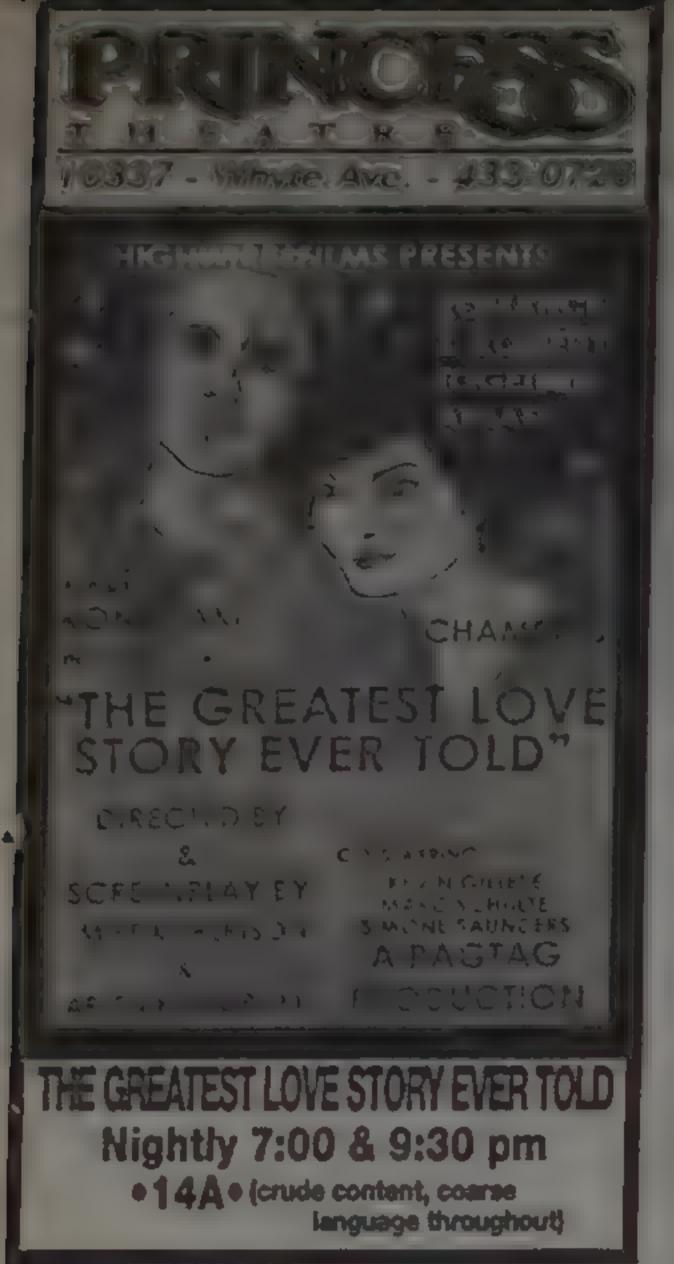
"Some people actually shouted out, they were so enraged by it,"
Robertson recalls.

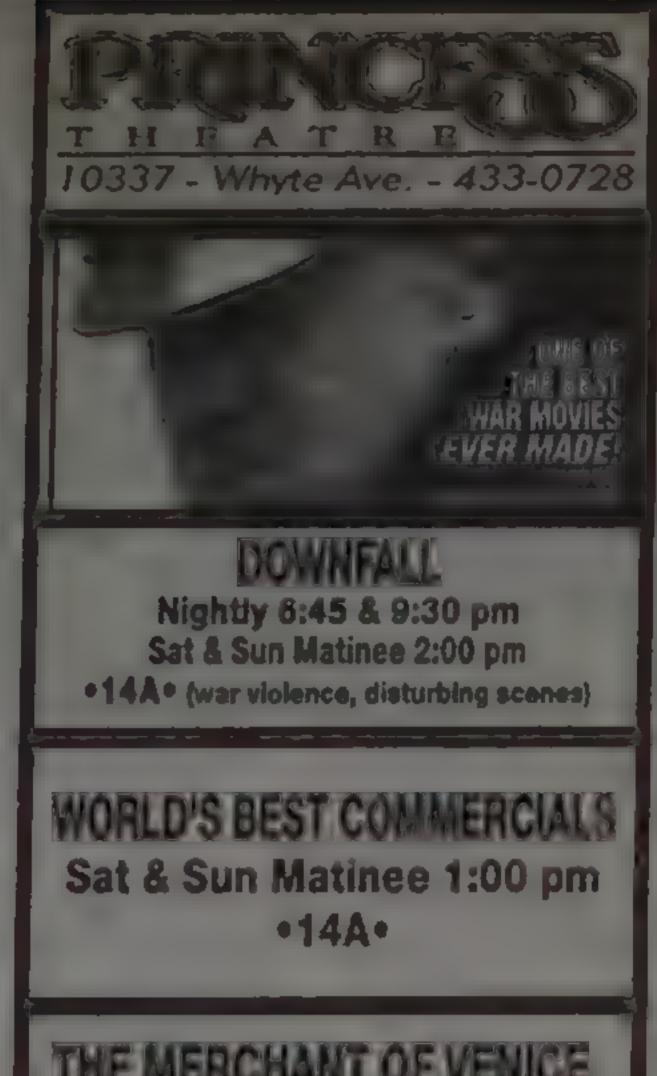
In its Edmonton incarnation, however, the onscreen action is so tongue-in-cheek that it's hard to imagine anybody taking any of it too seriously. •

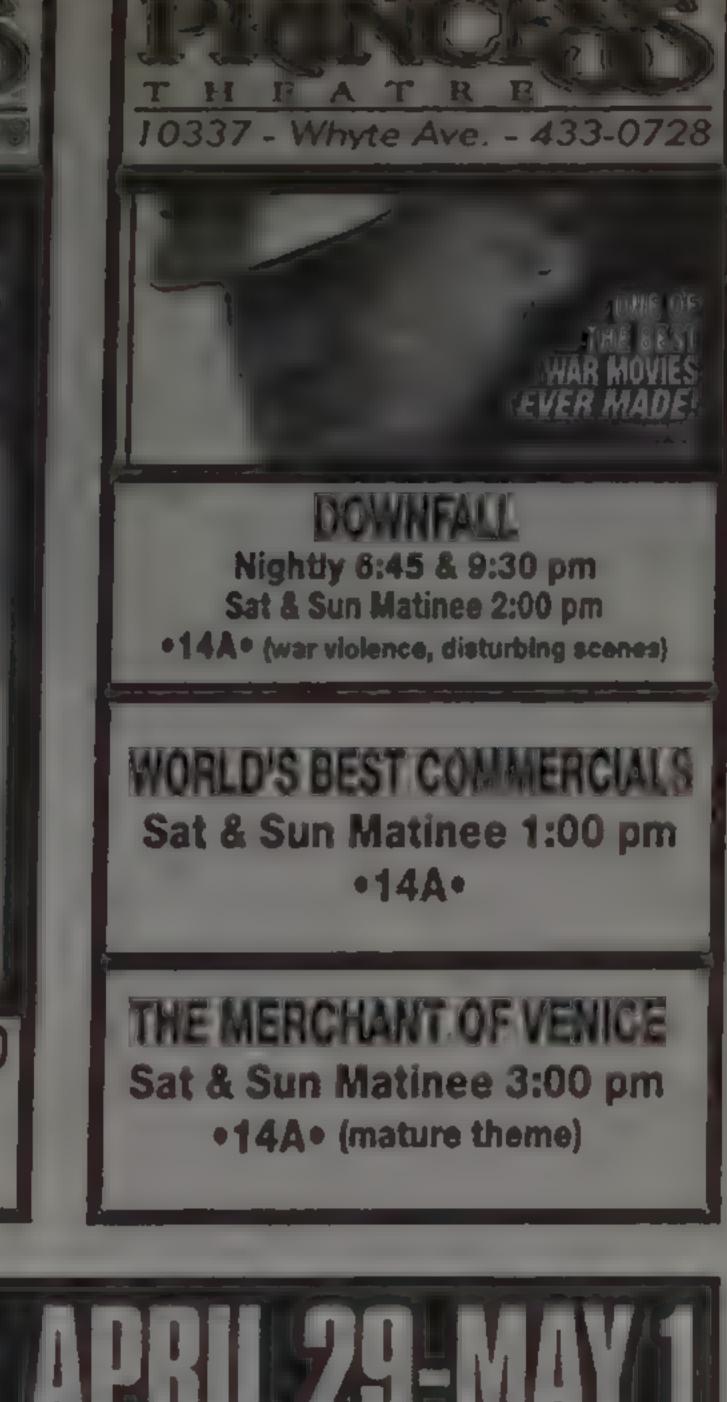
THE GREATEST LOVE STORY

Written and directed by Mike Robertson and Arlen Konopaki • Starring Arlen Konopaki and Tia Chambers • Opens Fri, Apr 29













Diplomatic for the people

Ho-hum The Interpreter was shot in the UN—will its heroine suffer the same fate?

BY JOSEF BRAUN

he folks responsible for publicizing The Interpreter have made a big point of letting us know that it was the first movie actually shot inside the United Nations. Besides the fact that this isn't strictly true (see The Glass Wall), you also have to wonder how this became the film's key selling point—like we've all just been desperately waiting to see a movie shot in there. What about the fact that the film has its own madeup tyrannized and impoverished African country named Matobo, with its very own made-up language called Ku (sounds like coup), a language spoken by Nicole Kidman with a vague accent? What about the fact that star Sean Penn gets to wear bad suits and brood for us again in lonely, darkened rooms and peeler bars? What about the fact that the film has no fewer

8712 - 103 Street - 433-0728 KUNG FU HUSTLE Nightly 7:00 & 9:00 pm Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm •14A• (violence throughout)

than five big-name Hollywood writers (including the two credited with the story) hashing out this terribly complicated political thriller? And why didn't they promote the fact that a key scene takes place in an actual New York City bus on a real street in the heart of the real Brooklyn, a location that easily possesses just as much potential for colour and political commentary as the UN?

I'm only being partly sarcastic

here. The fact is, it's hard to pin down just what to praise and what to poke fun at in The Interpreter. Every other scene exudes a certain air of polished respectability, the actors do a sound job (Penn is curiously muted, his voice somnambulistic but his eyes sharpened and alive), and the film's dizzying, well-edited setpieces create several moments of solid suspense. And yet, all these qualities fail to generate much real excitement (though one particularly unnerving scene will probably upset some New Yorkers) and only temporarily disguise the fact that this overworked script-by-committee is full of gaping holes and distracting implausibilities. And the whole cake is glazed with another of James Newton Howard's simultaneously innocuous and overbearing scores, a glut of movie soundtrack clichés that we can't escape even in the film's more delicate scenes. Howard's is the epitome of the sort of movie music that feels all the big emotions so we don't have to.

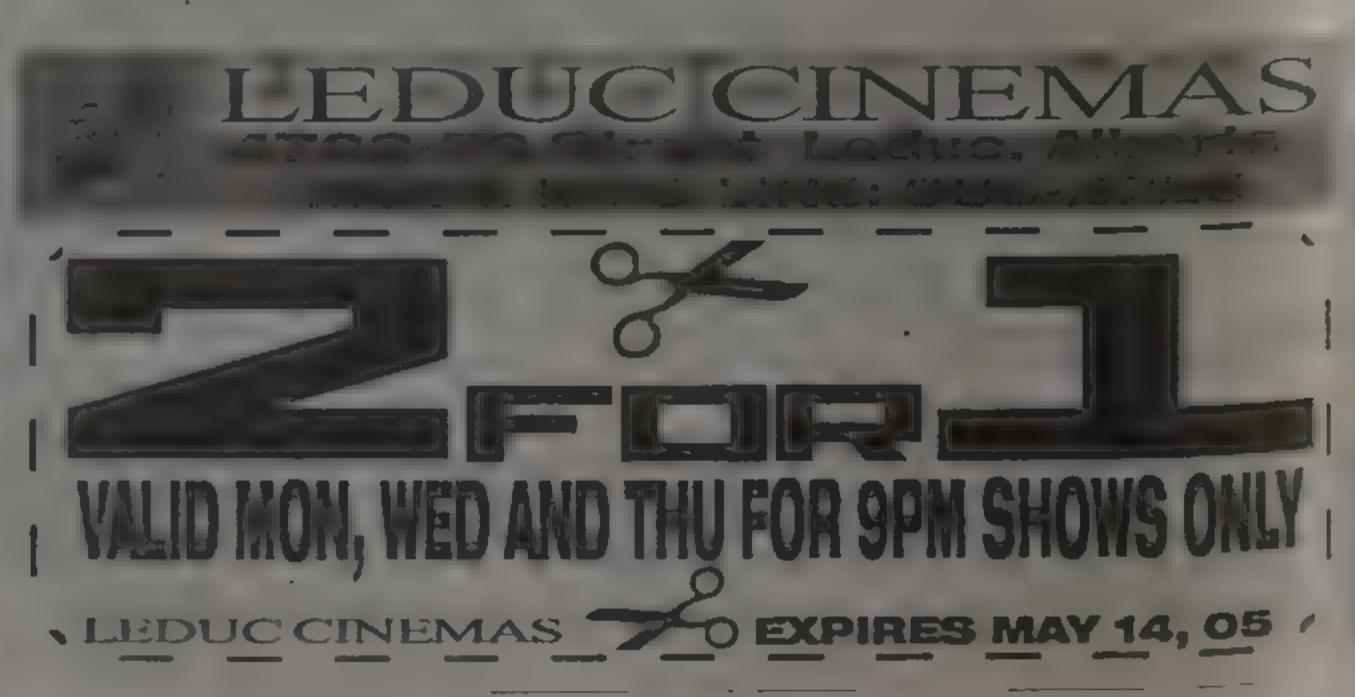
DIRECTOR SYDNEY POLLACK (also a fine actor who contributes a cameo here), is basically a no-style filmmaker, but a dependable, workmanlike one

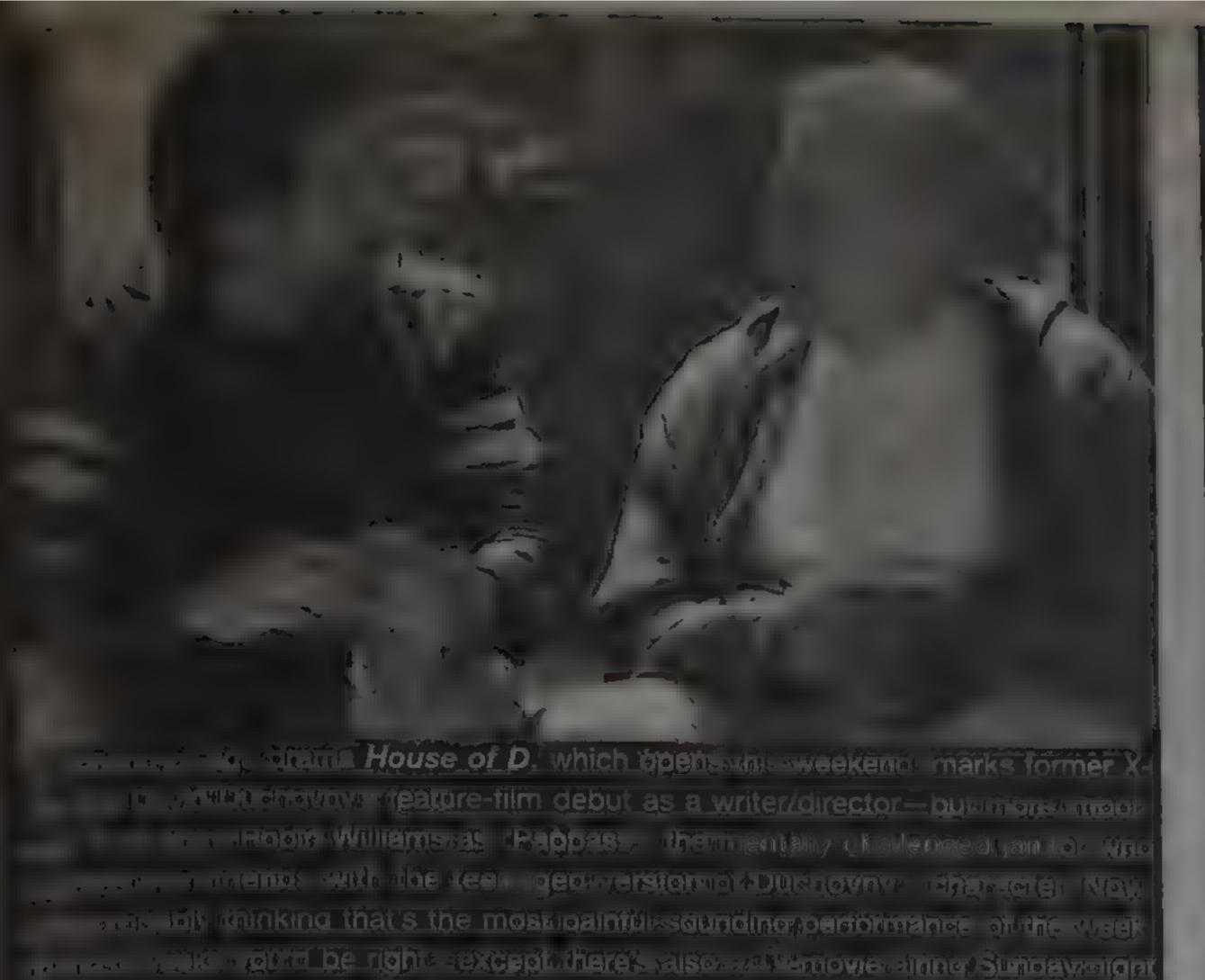
who trusts in the tried-and-true devices of old-fashioned Hollywood dramas. What marks The Interpreter most distinctively is Pollack's clear belief in the material, and this is perhaps what makes the whole feel so bland. Kidman's Sylvia is the UN interpreter who overhears a plot to kill the visiting leader of Matobo; Penn's Tobin is the Secret Service agent trying to protect both the visiting dignitary and Sylvia, who, with her mysterious past as a former citizen of Matobo, is obviously involved in this thing more deeply than she's willing to admit Unable to leave well enough alone, our writing squad has to concoct a number of coincidental parallels between Sylvia and Tobin that are way too textbook not to feel cynical about from the get-go. (Cue the scene in which Tobin confesses to Sylvia why he too is vulnerable and frightened and lonely and you get the idea.)

Ultimately, everything about The Interpreter is so deliberately post-9/11 that it begins to feel more like a seminar than a story: the allegories about grieving the dead, the ironies of faulty security measures and the blind eye turned to troubled, tumultuous peoples suffering in ignored countries while powerful nations are busy having misadventures in other faraway places. It may all sound very political and incendiary, but it's not No matter how hard it tries, The Interpreter is still nothing more than a reasonably engaging thriller with a dumb ending, its political backdrop amounting to nothing more than ominous window-dressing. ©

THE INTERPRETER

Directed by Sydney Pollack . Written by Charles Randolph, Scott Frank and Steven Zaillian . Starring Nicole Kidmanand Sean Penn . Now playing





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्राम अविकास अधिक Awards at the end of the year!

The Animation Show A collection of groundbreaking and award-winning short animated films from around the world, curated by Mike Judge and Don-Hertzfeld. Highlights include Bill Plympton's Guard Dog, Peter Cornvell's Ward 13, Amanda Forbis and Wendy Tilby's When the Day Breaks and Don Hertzfeld's The Meaning of Life. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Sun, Apr 29-May 1 (7) and 9pm)

Disjunction Director Carlo Ghioni's documentary about the efforts of average Argentinean working-class citizens to rebuild and reinvent their country in the months following the catastrophic collapse of the national economy - 2001. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Apr 28 (7pm)

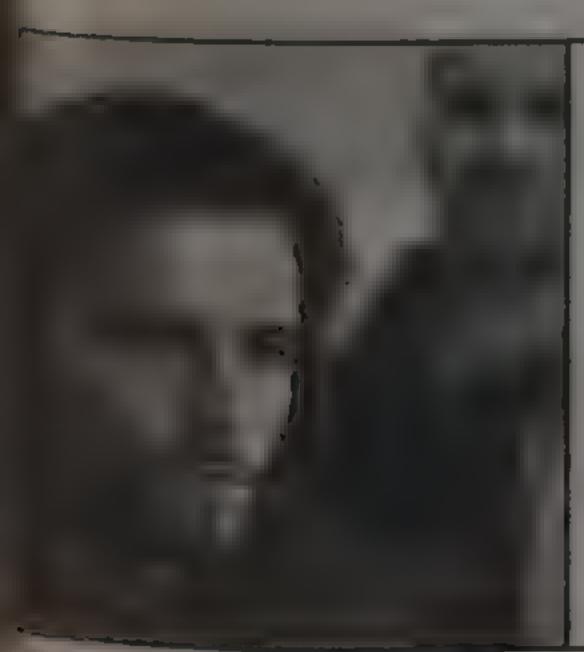
he Greatest Love Story Ever Told Arlen Konopaki (who also co-wrote and o-directed the film with Mike Robertson) and Tia Chambers star in this locallyroduced, gag-a-minute spoof of Hollywood romantic comedies.

the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Martin Freeman, Mos Def, Zooey Deschanel and Sam Rockwell star in director Garth Jennings's big-screen version Douglas Adams's cult sci-fi spoof, about an ordinary Englishman who embarks a wild series of interstellar adventures after the Earth is destroyed in order to make way for an intergalactic freeway.

House of D David Duchovny (who also wrote and directed), Robin Williams, ton Yelchin, Erykah Badu and Téa Leoni star in this sentimental, most-unforgetuble-person-l-ever-met tale about an unhappy man reflecting back on his anage friendship with a mentally challenged janitor in 1970s New York City.

A Shot In the Dark Peter Sellers, Elke Sommer, George Sanders and Herbert Lom star in The Pink Panther director Blake Edwards's 1964 farce in which bumbling inspector Clouseau makes it his misguided mission to prove beautiful woman is innocent of murder, despite overwhelming evidence to the entrary. Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, May 2 (8pm)

XX: State of the Union Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson, Willem Dafoe and lichael Roof star in Die Another Day director Lee Tamahori's sequel to the 2002 tion film XXX, in which a secret government agency springs a former Navy SEAL om prison in order to put him to work as an elite anti-terrorist field agent.



Orlando Bloom has carved out a curious, rather queasy-making niche for himself as Hollywood's favourite infidel-fighting dreamboat: he battled Somalis in Black Hawk Down, slaughtered hundreds of orcs in the Lord of the Rings movies and now in Kingdom of Heaven, he's a blacksmith-turned-knight who joins the Crusade against Saladin's Muslim army in 12th-century Jerusalem. Ridley Scott, the man behind Black Rain, Black Hawk Down and 1492: Conquest of Paradise, directs.

All showtimes are subject to change at any time.

CINEMA CITY:12/MOVIES:12

Movies 12: 130 Ave. 50 St. 472-9779

The showtimes listed are for the date of this laque, Thu, April 28 only. Please contact theatre for show-

young children) Cinema City 12: 12:55 4:15 7:40 Movies 12: 12:50:4:15:7:45

BEAUTY SHOP (14A, coarse and sexual language) Cinema City 12: 2 15 4:45 7 25 9 45 Movies 12: 1 30

MAN OF THE HOUSE (14A) Cinema City 12: 1 50 4 35 7:05 9 25 Movies 12: 1 55 4 55 7 05 9 35

BE COOL (14A, coarse language) Cinema City 12: 1 45

BOOGEYMAN (14A, frightening scenes not recommended for young children) Cinema City 12: 1:55 4:55 7:35 9:55 Movies 12: 1 45 4 40 7 35 10 05

children) Cinema City 12: 3 55 6 45 9 40 Movies 12: 3 30: 6 30 9 30

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HIDE AND SEEK (14A, frightening scenes) Cinema City 12: 1.25 4 30 7:45 10 05 Movies 12: 2 10 5:00 7 40 10:00

MEET THE FOCKERS (14A, crude content, sexual lan guage) Cinema City 12: 2:00 4 50 7 30 10:00 Movies 12: 1 50 4 35 7.20 9 55

Movies 12: 2 05 4 45 7 15 9 25

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NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) Cinema City 12: 1:35 4 10 7.10 9 50 Movies 12: 1 35 4 25 7.10 9 50

CITY CENTRE

Cinema City 12: 1 40 9 40

10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG. no passes) Daily 1 00 4 00 7.00 9 40

XXX: STATE OF THE UNION (14A, no passes) Daily 1 30 4 20 7 20 10 00

HOUSE OF D (STC) Daily 1:10 4 10 6:45 9:10

THE INTERPRETER (14A) Daily 12 40 3 50 7:10 10:10 A LOT LIKE LOVE (PG, sexually suggestive scenes, not

recommended for children) Daily 1 20 4:30 7:30 10 15 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR (18A, gory violence, disturb ing content) Fri-Tue Thu 1:40 4 40 7:40 10 20 Wed 1 40 4 40 10 20

DEAR FRANKIE (PG, coarse language) Daily 3 20 6.40 FEVER PITCH (PG) Daily 12 50 9 20

SAHARA (PG, violence) Daily 12 45 3 40 6 30 9 30 SIN CITY (R, gory violence throughout) Frt-Wed 12 30 3 30 6 50 9 50 Thu 4 00 6 50 9 50

CLAREVIEW

4311 39 Ave. 412 1533

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG, no passes) Fri-Sun 1 20 4 40 7 20 9 55 Mon-Thu 4 40 7 20

XXX: STATE OF THE UNION (14A, no passes) Fri-Sun-1:40 4 00 7 10 9 30 Mon-Thu 4 00 7 10 9.30

THE INTERPRETER (14A) Fri-Sun 12 50 3 40 6 50 9 40 Mon-Thu 3 40 6 50 9 40

A LOY LIKE LOVE (PG, sexually suggestive scenes, not recommended for children) Fri-Sun 2.20 4.50 7:30 10 00 Mon-Thu 4 50 7 30 10 00

KUNG FU HUSTLE (14A, violence throughout) subtitled Fri-Sun 2 30 5 10 7:40 10 00 Mon-Thu 5:10 7 40 10 00 MELINDA AND MELINDA (PG, mature theme, coarse language) Daily 9 00

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR (18A, gory violence, disturbing content) Fri-Sun 1:00 3 10 5.20 7 50 10:10 Mon-Thu 5 20 7 50 10 10

SAHARA (PG, violence) Fri-Sun 1:10 3 50 6:40 9 20 Mon-Thu 3 50 6 40 9.20

FEVER PITCH (PG) Daily 9 10

SIN CITY (R, gory violence throughout) Fri-Sun 1 30 4.20 7 00 9 50 Mon-Thu 4 20 7 00 9 50

GUESS WHO (PG, coarse language) Fri-Sun 1 50 4 10

6 30 Mon-Thu 4 10 6 30 ROBOTS (G) Fri-Sun 2 00 4 30 6 45 Mon-Thu 4 30 6 45

GALAXY CINEMAS @ SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 416-0150

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ing content) Fri 4 30 7 40 10 20 Sat-Sun 1.30 4 30 7 40 10:20 Mon-Thu 7 40 10 20

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3 20 6 45 9 30 Man-Thu 6 45 9 30

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MISS CONGENIALITY 2 ARMED AND FABULOUS (PG violence) Fri Sat Mon-Thu 6 30 9 20 Sun 9 20 :

ROBOTS (G) Fri 3 50 6:40 Sat-Sun 12 50 3 50 6 40 Mon Thu 6 40

THE PACIFIER (PG) Frt 4-20 Sat 1 20 4 20 Sun 1 20 WWE: BACKLASH (Classification not available) Sun 5 00

GARNEAU

8712-109 St. 433-0728

KUNG FU HUSTLE (14A, violence throughout, subtitled) Daily 7 00 9 00 Sat Sun 2 00

ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (14A, Sal 11 59)

CATEWAY 8

2950 Calgary Trail, 436-6977

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG) FA Sat Sun 12 50 1 25 3:45 4 15 7 00 7 25 9 30 10:00 Mon Tue Wed Thu 7 00 7 25 9 30 10:00

SAHARA (PG, violence) Fri Sat Sun 12 40 1 15 3 35 4 05 6 40 7 10 9 35 9 55 Mon Tue Wed Thu 8 40 7:10 9 35 111 MILLION DOLLAR BABY (PG, mature theme not recommended for young children) En Sat Sun 12 ama

9 40 Mon Tue Wed Thu 6 45 9 40 ICE PRINCESS (G) Frt Sat Sun 1 20 4 00 7.16 9 25 M o Tue Wed Thu 7 15 9 25

SIDEWAYS (18A, sexual content) Fri Sat 12.45 (Const 9 45 Sun 12 45 6 55 9 45 Mon Tue Wed Thu 6 55 + 45

LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE

EVENTS (PG) Fri Sat Sun 1 00 3 50 6 30 Mon Tue Wed Thu

GRANDIN THEATRE Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave. St. Albert. 458-9822

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METRO CINEMA

9828-101A Ave. Citedel Theatre. 425-9212

THE ANIMATION SHOW 2005 (14A) Fri Sat Sun 7:00 9:00 IN THE REALMS OF THE UNREAL (STC) Thu 9 00 MY ARCHITECT (PG) Thu 7 00

NEW WEST MALL:8:

CONSTANTINE (14A, horror, violence throughout) Frt-Sun

1 35 4 15 7 00 9 30 Mon-Thu 4 15 7 00 9 30 MAN OF THE HOUSE (14A) Fri-Sun 1.50 4 00 6 50 9 10

BE COOL (14A, coarse language) Frt-Sun 1 20 4 05 8 40 9 20 Mon-Thu 4 05 6 40 9 20

BOOGEYMAN (14A, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 2 10 4:25 7:20 9 45 Mon-Thu

4 25 7 20 9 45 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (PG, may frighten young

Thu 4 35 6 45 MEET THE FOCKERS (14A, crude content, sexual lan-

guage) Daily 9 00 RACING STRIPES (G) Fri-Sun 2 00 4 10 Mon-Thu 4.10

IN GOOD COMPANY (PG, coarse language) Daily 9 40

North Edmonton Cinemas=

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PRINCESS

10337-82 Ave. 433-0728

DOWNFALL (1944 A j futing species, La , F 1)

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Sun 1 00 THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (14A, mature theme) Sat Sun 3 00

THE GREATEST LOVE STORY EVER TOLD (13A COMPA content, coarse language throughout) Dally 7:00.3 +

SUVERCITY WEST EDMONTON MALL

FREM 382 11 5 444-2400

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SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON

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THE PACIFIER (PG) Daily 1 20

WWE: BACKLASH (Classification not available) Sun 5.00

WESTMOUNT CENTRE

111 Ave. Groat Rd. 455-8726

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THE AMITYVILLE HORROR (18A, gory violence, disturb ing content) Sat Sun 1 15 3 25 Daily 7.10 9:30 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION (14A, no passes) Daily 7 00

9 30 Sat Sun 1:00 3:40 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG. no passes) Daily 6 50 9 15 Sat Sun 1 10 3.20

THE UPSIDE OF ANGER (14A, mature contact, coarse languege) Daily 7 10 Sat Sun 3 10

KUNG FU HUSTLE (14A, violence, subtitled) Daily 9.20 Sat Sun 1 00

Please contact theatre for confirmation.

Cinema 12, 3633-99 St. 463-5481

THE AVIATOR (PG, mature content, not recommended for

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THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (PG, may frighten young)

ARE WE THERE YET? (PG) Cinema City 12: 2.05 4:30 5 05 7.15 9 20 Movies 12: 2 05 4 50 7 25 9 35

FINDING NEVERLAND (G) Cinema City 12: 4:40 7:20

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8882-170 St. 444 1822

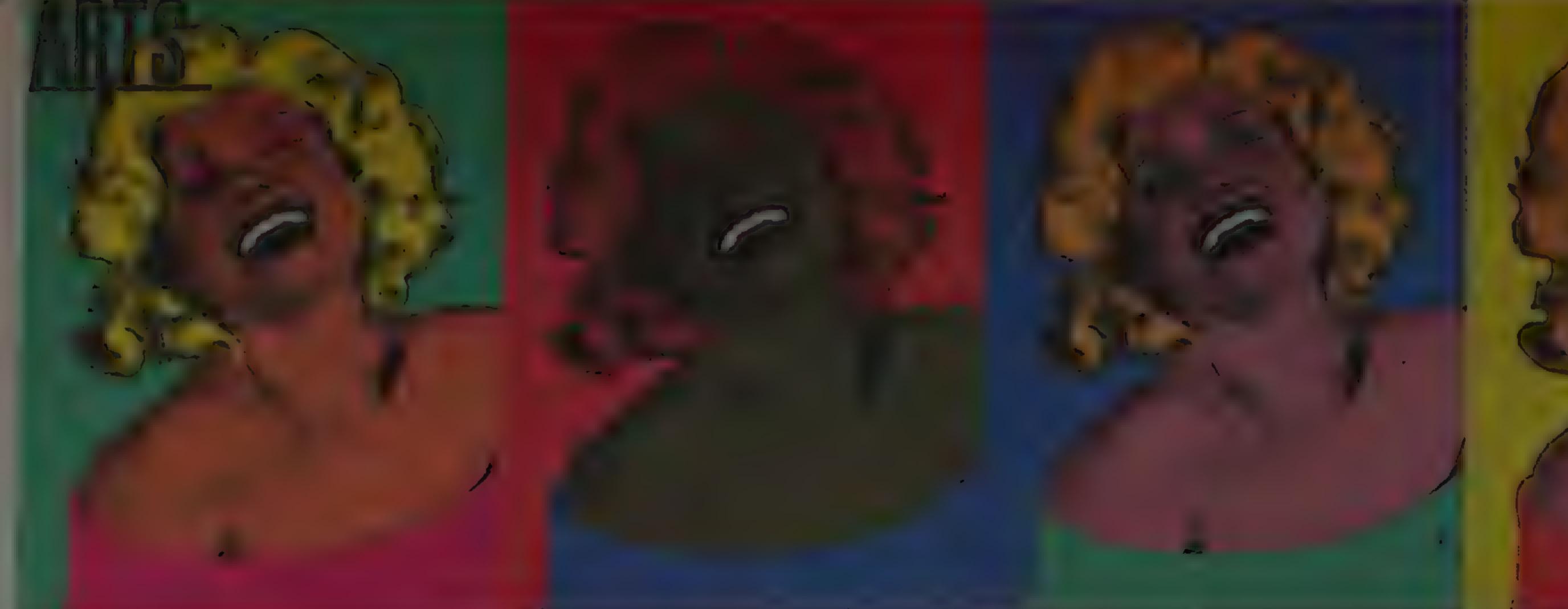
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The Monroe doctrine

An Albertan boy becomes Marilyn Monroe's lover in Ken Cameron's My One and Only

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

mometime early in her career, Marallyn Monroe must have read a really enticing Canadian travel brochure—or at least there must have been an executive at 20th-Century Fox who was really determined to see her photographed against all of Canada's greatest natural wonders. In 1952, she traveled to Niagara Falls to film the watery thriller Niagara for Henry Hathaway, and then just a year later she came to Banff with Robert Mitchum, Rory Calhoun and director Otto Preminger to make the Cinemascope Western River of No Return. Marilyn still wasn't quite the iconic goddess she would become just a few years later, but Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and How to Marry a Millionaire had firmly established her "lusciously adorable childwoman"

persona in the public mind, and she was definitely the biggest thing to ever hit the sleepy Alberta resort town. The excitement that surrounded her visit was captured a few years ago in a cover story in Saturday Night full of vivid photographs of Marilyn posing against the mountain scenery, as well as various Banff residents' even vivider recollections of their chance encounters with her.

Playwright Ken Cameron read that article with particular interest. You see, his screenplay adaptation of Paul Quarrington's novel Civilization (about a stuntman's relationship with a D.W. Griffith-like film director) had failed to attract investors, but he still had Hollywood on the brain. "I'd just liked working on Civilization so much," Cameron says. "It was a non-linear story about Hollywood, and I thought I should take some of these ideas and put them into a theatrical context. And when I saw the Marilyn stuff, I said, 'Ah! Here's a story that's ideally suited to being told in a non-linear fashion—a story about a fascination that haunts you through time.' It was the perfect vehicle for a notion I already had." And so hatched the premise for

Cameron's bittersweet play My One and Only, which receives its Edmonton premiere this Friday at Workshop West.

inspired by an anecdote in the Saturday Night piece about Marilyn walking down a mountain road, alone, and meeting three boys riding their bikes. "Supposedly Marilyn said, 'Hey! Hey, you kids! Can I ride your



bike?" Cameron laughs. "Sure,' they said. 'Sure, Marilyn Monroe—you can ride our bike!" In My One and Only, that incident is transformed into an encounter between Marilyn and one boy, 15-year-old Scout, who soon becomes the unhappy actress' confidant, her liquor supplier... and eventually her lover.

"I really tried to look at the question of what happens to you if your first girlfriend is Marilyn Monroe," Cameron says. And the answers he comes up with are complicated. There's a tricky moral dynamic going on in the play—as skillfully as Mari-

lyn often manipulates Scout into doing her favours and as damaging as their relationship is to Scout's attitude toward sex, you don't get the feeling that she's just cynically taking advantage of him. And despite the difference in the two characters' ages, the power issues aren't the same as they would be in, for instance, a play about Robert Mitchum seducing a teenaged girl by the shores of Lake Louise.

"If it's a sexual relationship between an older male and a teenaged girl," Cameron says, "we feel in our hearts that the girl doesn't want it—or if she does, she's been misled. But if it's a younger man and an older woman... well, what man doesn't want to be introduced to the glories of sex at an early age? Everything shifts. It's a completely different moral framework, and I find that fascinating. You know, there was a case in the papers not long ago where a female teacher was having sex with a teenaged student. Take a poll, and I bet you nine out of 10 people, men and women, would feel the boy got the better end of the deal! But what the play looks toward is that it does do damage, even if we don't think of it that way. We think,

'Wow, lucky kid,' but the play says, 'Lucky, my ass!'"

That's why Cameron argues that My One and Only isn't really a play about Marilyn Monroe, but a play about Scout. "Marilyn is just the surface of the play," he says. "Scout" the engine. Half the play doesn't even take place in 1953; th takes place 10 years later, and that part of the play focusses on regret and loss and the desperate wish to change the past.... It's a hard part for Chris Fassbender [who plays Scout] He never leaves the stage, and he got to react to everything going on around him on three different levels as a 15-year-old, a 25-year-old, and sometimes even an eight-year-old. In one scene he's three ages at once!"

Man, Robert Mitchum had it easy—all he had to do in Rive.

No Return was wrestle around in the bushes a little with Marilyn Monroe. ©

MYACHEJAND GREY

Directed by Ron Jenkins • Written by

Ken Cameron • Starring Chin

Fassbender, April Banigan, Glenn Ne

and Annette Loiselle • Arts Barns • April

29-May 8 • 477-5955

You'll remember April

The stary to play an legal" says April Banigan, the Edmonton actress who plays Marilyn Monroe—actress, sex symbol, alcoholic and reluctant Alberta tourist—in My One and Only. But it's hard to imagine another actress in town who'd be more perfect for the role. She's got Monroe's curvy sex appeal (her Monroe-like pose, lying naked on a sea of rubber ducks, on the poster for a play called Roommates 2.0 at the 2001 Fringe made that show a hit nearly single-handedly); and while she's definitely no dumb blonde, she's got some of the same approachable charm that made Monroe such a fantasy figure to moviegoers. I suspect

everyone in Edmonton theatre is a little bit in love with April Banigan. As a matter of fact, when Banigan appeared in my Fringe play last summer, I deliberately wrote in a moment where she had to give me a peck on the cheek just so I could look forward to getting a kiss from April Banigan at every performance.

Banigan, meanwhile, was always a little bit in love with Marilyn. "As a teenager, I just had a huge fixation on Marilyn Monroe," she says. "I didn't even watch a lot of her movies, but I had all these pictures of her on my wall and I kind of grabbed onto her image and played sort of a punk-rock version of her—you know, there I was

hair, but with pink streaks and combat boots. So I feel quite honoured to play her. It's scary, though, because everyone has an expectation as to course, for most of the play, I'm not playing Marilyn Monroe; I'm playing 'Norma Jean.' And I have to create all the Norma Jean stuff myself, because that's the side of her that the public didn't get to see."

And Banigan says the difference between the onscreen and the offscreen Marilyn couldn't have been more profound. "It was like night and day," she says. "Norma Jean was like an innocent little girl who didn't exude the sexuality that Marilyn did at all—people wouldn't even recognize her when she walked down the street. Marilyn had a different walk, a different voice, a different way of carrying herself. And she learned how to work it—she knew what sold, and she knew what people expected of her. Whenever she tried to do serious roles, the public made it very clear that wasn't what they wanted from her."

The play's big setpiece is a nude scene between Banigan and Chris Fassbender set at the Banff Hot Springs, but Banigan says it uses her sexuality in a much more challenging and complicated way than Marilyn ever got to use hers. "When Marilyn

takes her clothes off, it's a heartfeit, vulnerable, beautiful, uncomfortable scene," she says. "It's really about Scout's first sexual experience, and think it captures all that awkwardness and nervousness beautifully.... I'll tell you, though, I felt more fear leading up to rehearsals than when she started working on it. And oddly enough, its much harder to take your clothes off in a rehearsal hall than it is in a theatre in front of 500 people. But you know, I'm a mom. I have two sons. I've nursed two babies. And in a way, this is very empowering!" She raises her fist in mock-revolutionary triumph. "I'm doing this for nursing moms every where!" --- PAUL MATWYCHUK

Two men walk in, ne painting walks but when Tim gechner and Tony Baker collaborate

AY AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

sost people think that being a painter is romantic. They problably picture some sentimental oul, lost to the world perched in his arret or dreaming up better worlds etween drinking coffee in local afés. But for most artists, visual art is profoundly solitary activity, requirig endless hours spent entirely lone. Often, profound doubts set in. le begin to wonder about our role n society, whether we have any talnt, what our purpose in life is. The nswers that emerge from the blank anvas are sometimes disturbingly leak. As a result, visual artists often bok with awe upon dancers, actors nd musicians and envy their ability work with others, to share ideas, to solve problems, to encourage each other. Most visual artists can only dream of such companionship.

Most, that is, except for an innorative few like Tim Rechner and

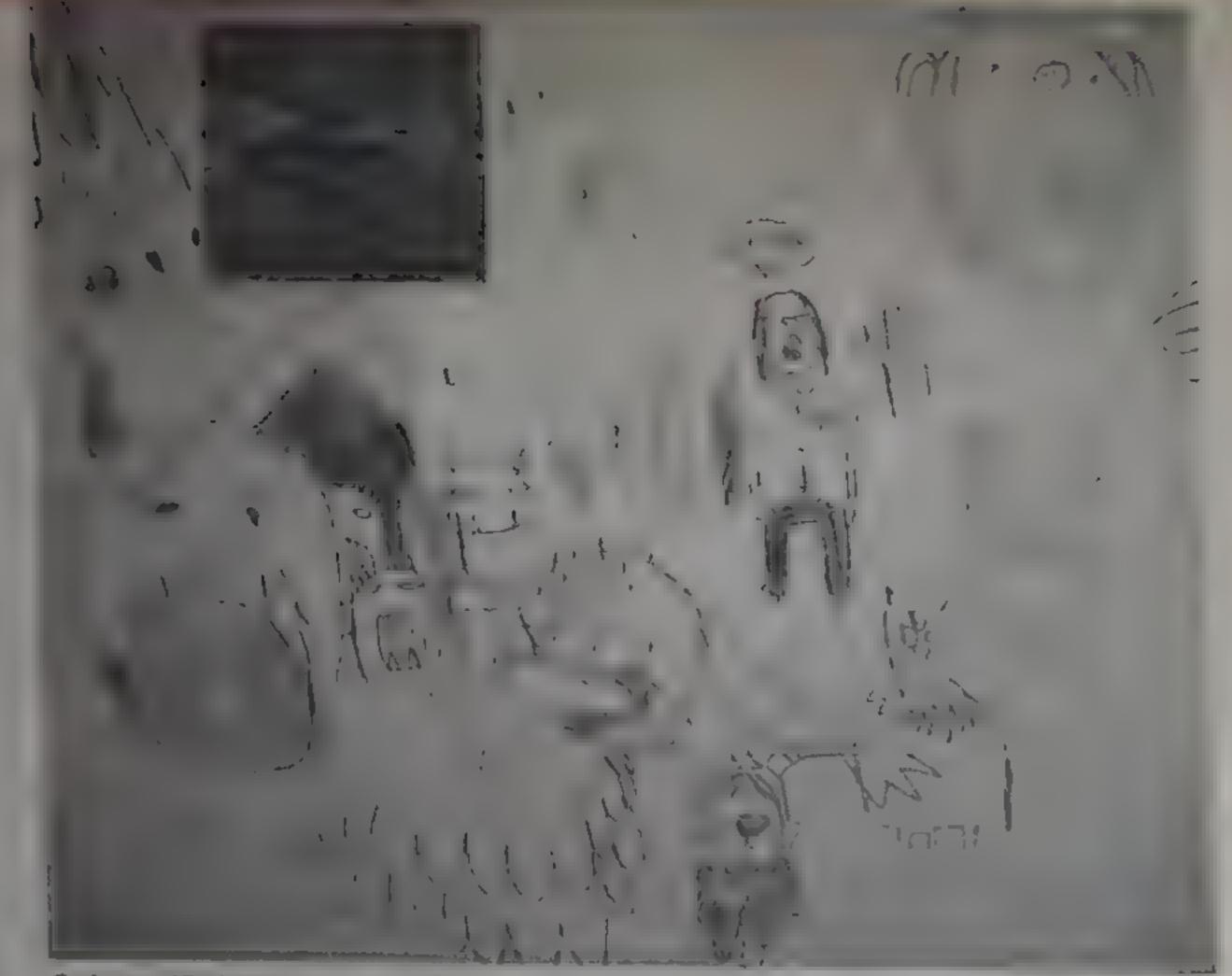
Tony Baker, who have decided to work on drawings together. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that both painters have extensive experience as musicians and playing in bands; to them, collaborating on a work of art seems like the most natural thing in the world. The result of their work, both individual and collaborative, is currently featured in a large show entitled Theo's Saloon at the Urban Roots Hair Salon and Gallery.

For Rechner, the whole idea of working on art with others started when he was still a student. "When I went to Red Deer College I had a tight group of talented friends and we started collaborating," he says. "It was a social activity; we sat around and drew, wrote stories and poems together." Rechner found working with other artists so stimulating, in fact, that he continued to do so long after graduating. "Even now," he says, "I am sending drawings back and forth between Edmonton and Halifax."

But when Rechner first saw Baker's work at the Edmonton Art

him; all he could think of at the time was how impressed he was. "I saw Tony's work in 2001—he had a show in the Kitchen Gallery," Rechner recalls. "I was blown away. I didn't run into a lot of contemporary younger artists who were doing things that I wish I were doing." He promptly introduced himself to Baker and started following his shows. Baker began attending Rechner's shows regularly as well, and the two artists became fast friends. Then, when an apartment became available in ArtsHab, where Rechner was living, he suggested that Baker move in; and as they were painting right next door to each other, they began to work on some drawings together.

BEFORE THE TWO ARTISTS began exchanging drawings (the drawings) went back and forth over several sessions), they set an important ground rule ensuring no feelings would get hurt. "That's the key element I make clear before I start a process like this," Rechner explains. "To work with the absolute artistic freedom that I think is necessary, there can't be any restrictions; it has to be the freedom to make whatever aesthetic decisions you have to make." For some of his



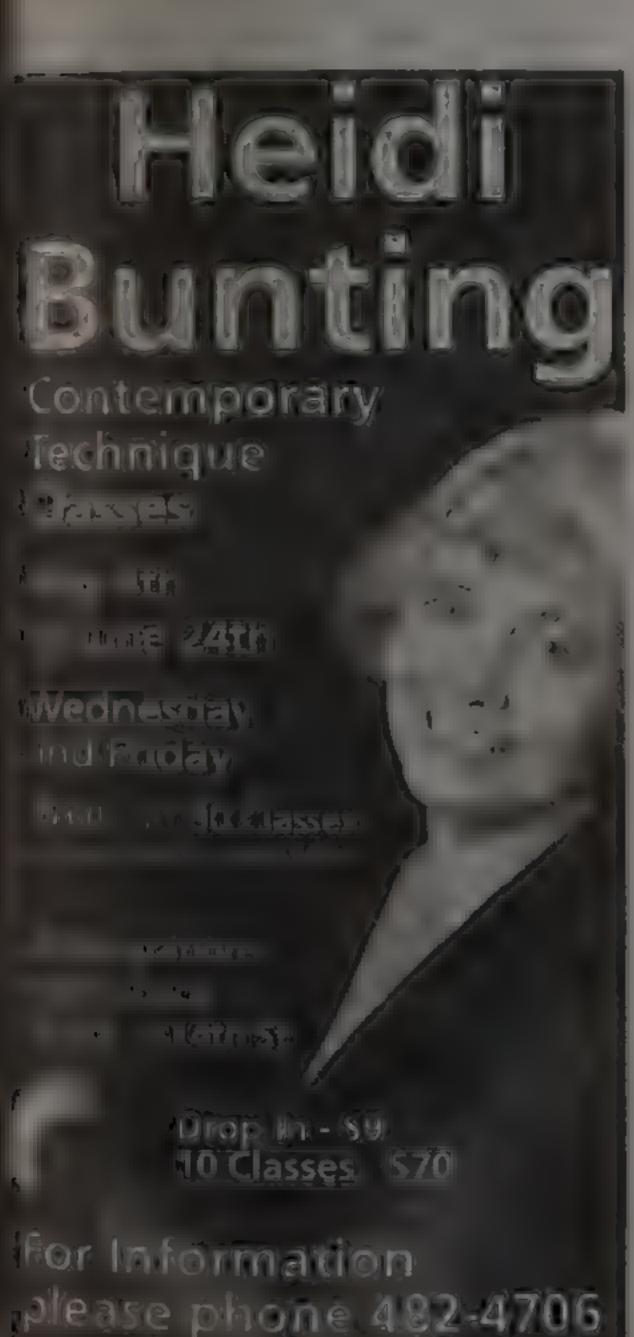
Calzone/Palzone by Tim Rechner and Tony Baker

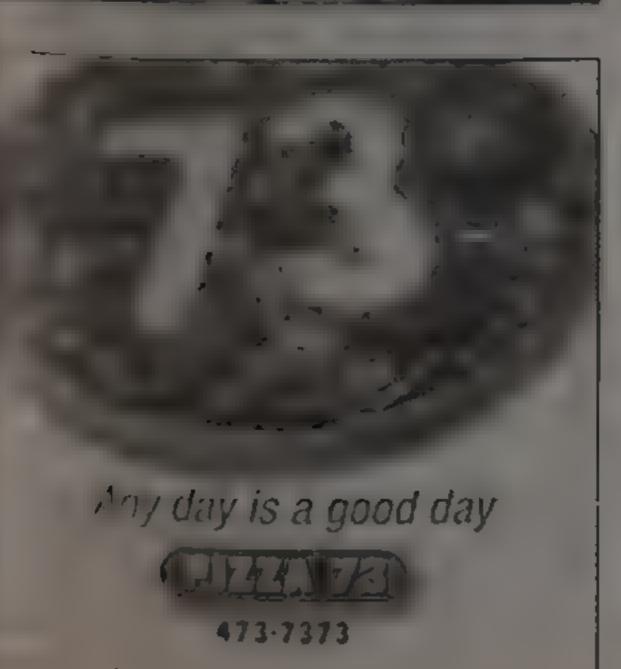
both parties: "I have complete free- line. But the result of their joint work dom to draw over any element of this drawing," it read. "Under no circumstances will any feelings get hurt." (But with Baker he didn't need to go that far. "We are both really laid-back people and we respect each other," Rechner explains.)

Their collaborations turned into something akin to a jam session among jazz musicians. Each artist carries his own melody, a melody of lines and colours that intertwine with each other. You can still easily recognize Rechner's loose, intultive strokes

is greater than the sum of its parts. There's something groundbreaking in a visual artwork that puts aside individual egos. Perhaps it's not just musicians who can work together after all. "I like the idea of working with like-minded people, learning from other people" says Rechner "Tony is someone I really respect. He is one of my heroes. He's a contemporary hero, one who happens to be a friend of mine."

THEO'S SALOON







Urew confessions

A ghostwriter battles for the soul of a fictional girl detective in less-than-edgy Becoming Sharp

BY COLLEEN ADDISON

memember Nancy Drew and all those other girl detectives? The La La ponytailed ponderers, brave like Miss Marple without the bicycle, smart like Sherlock Holmes without cocaine.... Actually, no, I don't remember them much either.

with Becoming Sharp, Edmonton theatre staple David Belke takes a stab (aren't puns great?) at the shadowy '50s world of ghostwritten girls'

detective stories. Coralie Cairns is Eleanor Innes, a hack writer with

little talent but more than enough pretensions to make up for it. She writes the "Sally Keene" mystery series under the Carolyn Keeneesque pseudonym Sylvia Sharp, strutting her way across the stage in a series of flamboyant outfits and waving an unlit cigarette holder for dramatic effect. But when Eleanor, after 12 years of Sally Keene, feels her talents drifting away into a mystical mist (to quote one of her Keene books), she co-opts a young up-andcomer named Judy Parker (Vanessa Holmes) into penning Sally's latest adventure for her. Judy is excited as heck, her flip 'do bouncing away as she types, cheeks blooming with

silently up behind Parker at her desk. She is the Gen-Xer, relegated to the even gruntier work, and she isn't terribly thrilled about it. Sadly, Starr is the weak link in this trio of actresses-but in her defence, she's not really given much to do until the last scene, spending the rest of the play trying to look sinister while dusting and making inquiries as to laundry or lunch.

IT'S A FLAW IN THE PLAY that its many references to Ms. Drew and her crew of amateur sleuths remain unexplained. You have to be fairly conversant with the Carolyn Keene style and characters to get a lot of the But that's our fault, see, 'cause jokes. The nondescript boyfriend? The ever-present tomboy sidekick? It's been a while since I peered through my magnifying glass (you can burn ants with those things, you

> know!); the details of Nan and the gang are a bit fuzzy in my mem-

ory and the play doesn't help.

A more serious problem, though, is with the books themselves, which aren't nearly distinctive enough to warrant parodying. The endless "Sally creeps down a moonlit lane" voiceovers don't sound too different from what you'd find in any other hack teen mystery, and you end up wondering why anyone would care who the original author is.

But this, of course, is the central issue of Becoming Sharp. Who is Sylvia Sharp? Is it Eleanor, in whose hands Sally first learned Keeneness? Or Judy, whose Sally stories are even sharper than Eleanor's, brimming as they are with spies

Having walked through the valley of ghosts myself, I can safely state that nobody cares who ghostwriters are except ghostwriters

way too much blush. Wait, though; there's a catch—Judy has to devote herself solely to the Sally franchise, but her attention keeps wandering to Crimes of Humanity, the Great American Novel she is nearly finished writing. Ambitions, the curse of all '50s women.

Okay, this premise doesn't sound like much, and the first act does drag a bit. Things pick up, though, in the second act, as Eleanor schemes to dispel Judy's dreams and make her into the perfect employee. And as the twentysomething talent who is tricked into grunt work (very apt in Alberta's baby-boomer-obsessed market), Holmes is good, if a wee bit too excited. (I can't imagine, even in those sweet, sugary '50s, that any writer would enthuse over writing Nancy Drew novels—especially not someone like Judy, who cites Ken Kesey and William S. Burroughs as her literary idols.)

Rounding out the cast is Rebecca Starr as Penelope, the pathetic housekeeper who's forever creeping

and sneakiness? Or is it Penelope, who sits up nights, secretly tap-tapping away and putting the edge back into her employer's increasingly blah plotlines? Having walked through the valley of ghosts myself, I can safely state that nobody cares who ghostwriters are except ghostwriters. Still, it's too bad that Belke doesn't see fit to take the idea a bit further. For example, if Penelope's changes make her a Sylvia Sharp, why don't the editors' changes make them all Sharps, too?

But never mind. Becoming Sharp is fun, even if it could do with more of a punch. And I'm now hoping for more parodies of kid-lit. Trixie Belden? Beverly Cleary? Sweet Valley High? Piers Anthony? The possibilities abound. O

EECOMING SHARP

Directed by Kim McCaw . Written by David Belke . Starring Coralie Cairns, Vanessa Holmes and Rebecca Starr • Varscona Theatre • To May 8 • 434-5564

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to Glenys at listings@vueweekly.com Deadline is Friday at 3pm

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

AGNES BUGERA GALLERY 12310 Jasper Ave (482-2854) • GARDEN PATH: Paintings by Nancy Day • Until May 12

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) . Main Gallery: REFLECTIONS; THE FREE SPIRITS: Fibre artworks by Ann Haessel and Vickie Newington, Barbara J. West; until May 21 . Discovery Gallery: MUSINGS ON MY FIRST NINE LIVES: Mixed media artworks by Joan Irvin; until May 21 • ARTSTRAVIGANT FACES: Fibre art portraits by Wendy Rao; until May 21

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • LENS WORK: Photographs by Wade Pike, Corey Hochanchka, Dave Johnston, Wally Bauman and Mike Montana • Art walk: May 5 (6-9pm)

ARTS BARNS 10330-84 Ave . COMMON GROUND. STRUGGLE AND SOLIDARITY ACROSS THE AMERICAS: Photographs by Lori Willocks and Julia Wong • Sat, Apr. 30 (11am8pm); Sun, May 1 (11am-4pm) • Opening: Sat, Apr. 30 (11am), featuring Sherry McKibben

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3 FI, 10217-106 St (439-9532/423-2966) • Open: Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • BEYOND OLYMPIA: Artworks of the female form . Until April 28

BEARCLAW GALLERY 10403-124 St (482-1204) • Artworks by Norval Mornsseau, Daphne Odjig, Roy Thomas, Jane Ash Poitras, George Littlechild, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Jim Logan, Maxine Noel, Aaron Paquette and others

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 9103-95 Ave (461-3427) • Group show featuring members artworks • Until May 11

MINISTRE BURES TO THE STREET CALLED Y 9821 82 Ave (439-8210) = FLESH-BEYOND THE SURFACE: Oil paintings by Christl Bergstrom • Until May 14

COLLECTIV CONTEMPORARY ART AND DESIGN SHOP 6507-312 Ave (491-0002) • Open; Wed-Fri 12-6pm, Sat 10-6pm, Sun 12-4pm • EMERGE: Through May • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 28 (4-9pm)

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-Spm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • FROM NEAR AND FAR: Artworks that explore. Canada as a multicultural society; until May 23 • 19TH CENTURY FRENCH REALIST MASTERWORKS FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA; until May 29 . Realism in Art Lecture Series: From Realism to Naturalism: Balzac Flaubert and Zola; lecture presented by Dr. Anna Gural-Migdail; Thu, May 5 (7pm) • BETWEEN BORDERS: Until June 19 . EYE FOR ARCHITEC-TURE: Photographs by James Dow; until May 8 • RE-BUILDING THE WORLD: Artists' interpretation of architecture; until May 8 • Architecture for Lunch: Nemausus 1; Thu, Apr. 28 (noon) . Kitchen Gallery: OBSERVANCES: PAINTINGS OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS By David Janzen; until May 8 . Children's Gallery: TIR-NA-NOG (FOREVER YOUNG): By Spider Yardley-Jones = \$9 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior)/\$3 (child 6-12)/free (member/child 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open Tue by appt. only, Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • COL-LECTION 2005: Rotating show of artists works

FACULTY OF EXTENSION CENTRE U of A 2nd Fl, 8303-112 St (492-2045) = ROZOME: Japanese textile traditions revisited, hand painted, wax and gutta resist silk kimonos . Until May 16 . Opening reception: Fri, Apr. 29 (7-9pm)

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open: Mon-Wed, Sat 10am-6pm, Thu-Fri 10am-9pm, Sun 12-5pm • Open Mon-Wed, Sat 10-6, Thu, Fn 10-9, Sun 12-5 = Eskimo soapstone carvings of bears by Salia Kelley. Eskimo and Indian silver and gold jewellery by M. Taho . Through April

FRINGE GALLERY Bsmt 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open: Mon-Sat 9:30-6pm • STRICT MACHINE: Acrylic and graphite on canvas by Cynthia Gardiner; through April • Figurative paintings by Shelly Rothenburger; through May

FRONT GALLERY 12312 Jasper Ave (488-2952) * Photographs and drawings by Steve Burger . Until mid May

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) . Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • CONSUMP TUOUS: Photographs by Shelley Miller; until May 21 Front Room: A CONCESSION TO OBSESSION: Paintings by Ashley Andel; until May 21

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) . Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • Drawings and paintings by Ghodssi Raxavy and friends from the Iranian community in Edmonton; until May 5 . SPRING DEBUT: Artworks by the Centre's senior arts and crafts members; May 9-27; open house: Wed, May 11 (6:30-8:30pm

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm . Artworks by Sheila Cline, Marilyn Rife, Jim Cupido, Shirley Thomas, Raymond Cox, Jim Painter. Pottery by Helena Ball, western bronzes by Gina McDougall-Dohoe • Through April

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Dave Ripley, Don Sharpe, Jim Brager. Etchings by Thelma Manarey. Silkscreens and sengraphs by Josh Kakegamic, Sam Ash, Jackson Beardy, Garry Meeches, Richard Bedwash, Isaac Bignell and Paul Williams . Through April

LANDO GALLERY 11130-105 Ave (990-1161) • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5:30pm; Sat 10am-4:30pm • EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY, Paintings by Barbara McGivern • Until May 11

LATTTUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) * ALBERTA

WILDLIFE: Artworks by Tom Baggeley, Penny Buckner, Paul James Coutts and others . Until May 7

LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY Spruce Grove (962-0664) • WHAT IS LIFE ABOUT: Artworks by More Than Seven • Until Apr. 30

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm LIGHTNESS OF BEING: Artworks by members of the Sculptors' Association of Alberta; until May 1 • INSIDE THE DRESS: Artworks curated by Mary Holdgrafer; May 7-July 10; opening reception: May 12 (7-9pm)

MCPAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open: Mon-Sat 10am-4pm Sun 10am-6:30pm • CONSIDER THE LILIES: Paintings by Glenda Hope Lewisch; until May 1 • PROXIMITY: Installation by Noni Boyle; May 8-31; opening reception: Sun, May 8 (1-3:30pm)

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-Spm • SEAMS LIKE OLDE TYMES: Heritage quilts from across Canada • Until Apr. 30

NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Stollery Gallery, 9702-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-2pm, 5at 10am-noon • LEARNING IN THE VERY HEART OF COMMUNITY: Silent auction featuring jewellery by Denise Pridmore and Liz McGuire, pottery by Femande Beland and Adoline Glenn and artworks by the students of the 7 City Centre Schools, Fundraiser for art programs for City Centre Education Project schools • Fri, Apr. 29 (3-7pm), Sat, Apr. 30 (11am-4pm)

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Fri 12-Spm; Sat 2-6pm • THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A FAT QUARTER: Quilts from across Alberta presented by the St. Albert Quilters' Guild; until Apr. 30 • Art Ventures: Create quilt blocks (6-12yrs); \$2 • HIGH ENERGY X: Artworks by St. Albert High Schools; May 5-June 4; opening reception and art walk, featuring musical guests Wildfire: Thu, May 5 (6-9pm)

PRODUCE ALL PROSECUES OF ALLESSEED A 1283 S. 102 ALE (453-9100) • Open Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • FACES OF SALT: Until May 14 • EDMONTON GRADS: Until May 1 • OUR ALBERTA: Alberta Photographic Society; until May 20 • The Natural History Gallery: • BUG ROOM: Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • THE BIRD GALLERY: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit . TREASURES OF THE EARTH: Geology collection, Permanent exhibit • WILD ALBERTA GALLERY: Presentations every weekend (1pm and 2pm) • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am) • Terrace: BIG THINGS 3: Large-scale sculpture; until Sept. 13

ROBERTSON-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH Memorial Hall, 10209-123 St (238-2111/435-8794/468-1327) • PUEBLITO ARTWORKS: Children's art and silent auction presented by Pueblito Canada Inc • Fri, Apr. 29 (6:30-9pm)

BOYELES AND COMPANY GALLERY 101101171 SE (426-4035) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-Spm, Sat 12-Spm • Watercolours by Frances Alty-Arscott, Jeanne Findlay, Signid Behrens; oils by Audrey Pfannmuller, George Schwindt, Bruce Thompson; acrylics by Steve Mitts, Elaine Tweedy, Angela Grootelaar; sculpture by Rogelio Menz; blown glass by Darren Petersen, Susan Gottselig, Mark Gibeau • Westin Hotel (Lobby): Oils by Nel Kwiatkowska; (Pradera Room): Oils by Audrey Pfannmuller

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • ECHOES IN WIND-IRELAND: New landscape paintings by Wendy Wacko • Until May 10

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-Spm) . SEARCHING FOR AGUA. Printworks by Tomoyo Ihaya; until Apr. 30 . MISPRINT: Printworks by Patrick Mahon; May 5-June 4; opening reception: Thu, May 5 (7-9pm) • Artist lecture: Thu, May 5 (7-8pm)

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY GALLERY Main Foyer, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq. 100 St, 102 Ave • Mixed media paintings by Shelley Rothenburger; until Apr. 29 . Theatre Foyer Gallery (bsmt): FROM THE TREASURE CHEST: Artworks by Thaneah; until Apr. 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • INTERPRETATIONS OF TEXTURE: Artworks by gallery artists • Until Apr. 30

TELEPHONE MUSEUM Prince of Wales Armounes Heritage Centre, 10444-108 Ave (433-1010) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-3pm • Opening: May 4 (2pm)

TU GALLERY 10718-124 St (452-9664) . Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • Photographs and furniture • Throughout April

URBAN ROOTS 10143-82 Ave . THEO'S SALOON: Artworks by Tony Baker and Tim Rechner . Until June 14

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • PAINTED PASSIONS: Paintings by Karen Aulik-Now, Lyla Couzens, Karin Richter, and Kathryn Sherman • Until May 21

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • Encaustic, acrylic mixed media paintings by Susana Espinoza and abstract paintings by Chris Carbone • Apr. 30-May 17 • Opening reception: Sat, Apr. 30, artists in attendance 3-4pm

WEST END GALLERY 12308 Jasper Ave (488-4892) WEEKEND WANDERINGS: Paintings by Paul Jorgensen; until Apr. 29

WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, 10155-102 St . WORKERS' ART SHOW . Until May 7

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 |asper Ave (432-9427) • Readings by Fred Stenson from Lonesome Hero, and Lee Kvern reads from her novella Alterall • Thu, Apr. 28 (7:30pm)

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 10324 Whyte Ave, upstairs (914-8620) . The Raving Poets Live: open stage poetry • Every Tuesday (8pm sign-up)

MELTING POT 10351-82 Ave . Stroll of Poets; Thu, Apr. 28 (8pm) • Featuring Melanie Rae performing Triston and Iseult, May 8 (2:30pm); \$16/\$12 (TALES member)

NAKED CYBER CAFÉ 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, poet-

ry, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Eclectic Electric Orchestra . Every Thu (8pm)

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Sir Winston Churchal Sq (496-7063) . Centre For Reading and the Arts Brown Bag Book Club discussing River of Darkne's ha Rennie Airth; Fri, Apr. 29 (noon) . Centre Core:

Reading by Marwan Hassa, author of The Lost Polent UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA Room 122, Education Soun, Bldg, U of A . Canadian Authors Association Writers Circle featuring Florence McKie A Case Study From Dirital and Dilemma to Decision and Text . Apr. 29 (7pm)

WHITEMUD CROSSING BRANCH AUDITORIUM 4211-106 St (422-8174) . An Evening with the Authors: Readings by the authors short-listed for the 2005 Alberta Book Awards . Thu, Apr. 28 (7pm)

LIVESCOMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu 8:30pm, Fri 8:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm Mike Jenkins; Apr. 28-30 • Tim Koslo; May 5-7

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Show times nightly at 8pm; weekends 8pm and 10:30pm . Blake Clark with Rick Bronson; Apr 28-29 . Blake Clark with Rick Bronson and Paul Brown, Sat, Apr. 30 • Rick Bronson; Sun, May 1 • Silly Sundays for Kids: Magician Ron Pearson and balloon artist Roger Jorgenson; Sun, May 1 . Insane Entertainment-Sword Swallowing-Glass Eating-Regurgitation ... and that's the safe stuff; Tue, May 3 . improv Extravaganza with Skit For Brains; Wed, May 4 . Comedy Central regular Sam Fedele with Rick Bronson and guests; May 5-8 . Silly Sundays for Kids with the magic of Ron Pearson and Dan the Balloon Man; May 8

FESTIVAL PLACE Sherwood Park (449-3378) . Don Harron • Wed, May 4 (2pm) • \$25 (theatre seating)/\$45 (lunch and performance)

WUNDERBAR HOFBRAUHAUS 8120 101 St (436) 2286) • The Lederhoosers Super Comedy Dryhump • Every Fri (8:30pm) • Free

YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABERET Londonderry Mall (481-9857) • Peter Kelamis; Apr. 28-30

THEATRE

AN EVENING OF ONE-ACTS Walterdale Playhouse. 10322-83 Ave (439-2845) . Two new short plays by local playwrights, the winners of Walterdale Theatre' annual literary contest . May 9-14 (8pm) . \$12-\$14 (adult)/\$10-\$12 (student/senior) . Tickets available at TIX on the Square (420-1757)

BECOMING SHARP Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave. (434-5564) • Kim McCaw directs Vanessa Holmes, Coralie Cairns and Rebecca Starr in the world premiere of David Belke's comedy about a novice author who think she's landed the job of a lifetime ghost-writing books for a celebrated mystery novelist, only to discover the task is much more nerve-wracking than she ever counted on . Until May 8 (Tue-Sat 8pm, Sat-Sun 2pm) • Sat matinee Pay-What-You-Can (door); Tuesdays: Two-for-one (door) Wed, Thu, Sun matinees: \$15 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior); Fri-Sat evenings: \$20 (adult)/\$16 (stu

dent/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square DIE-NASTY! Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • An all-star cast of the city's top comic actors travel back to the Middle Ages - a time when love on. courtly, desire was sinful and personal hygiene was suspect at best—for the 14th season of Edmonton' only live, improvised soap opera • Every Mon (8pm) until May 30 • \$10 (door)

HUMBLE BOY Citadel Theatre, Main Stage, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Ian Prinsloo directs Charlotte Jones's off-the-wall comedy, which reinvents William Shakespeare's Hamlet as the story of a nerdy young British astrophysicist searching for scientific truths while dealing with his lonely mother and his unsympathetic, bus-driving stepfather . May 7-29 . Tickets available at the Citadel box office

MERRY GO ROUND Jekyll and Hyde Pub, 10610-100 Ave (433-4999) • Ryan Hughes directs this unusing the atre project inspired by Arthur Schnitzler's La Ramée, a series of sexy, interlocking short plays by Adam Burges Ryan Hughes, Heather Morrow, Mieko Ouchi, Dave Owen, Treavor Schmidt, Scott Sharplin, Morgan Smith and Vern Thiessen . May 5-15, Tue-Sat 8pm, Pay-What-You-Can: Sun 2pm • \$14 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior) . Tickets available at TIX on the Square

MUNCHA BUNCHA MUNSCH The Citadel, Maclal Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Vern Thiessen directs Kim McCaw's adaptation of five stories by beloved children's author Robert Munsch: I Have to Pigs, Murmel, Murmel, Good Families Don't and Wait and See . Until May 1

MY ONE AND ONLY Arts Barns, 10330-84 Ave (420 1757) . Ron Jenkins directs April Banigan and Chini Fassbender in Ken Cameron's quirky coming-of-age tale, set in Banff in 1952, about a 15-year-old boy who falls madly in love with Marilyn Monroe, who has come to town with Robert Mitchum to film Robert of No Return for director Otto Preminger . Apr. 29 May 8 . \$20 (adult)/\$17 (student/senior) . Ticket available at TIX on the Square

THE MYSTERY OF IRMA VEP The Citadel, Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) . John Paul Fishbach directs Wade Lynch and John Ullyatt in Charles Ludlam's uproarrous, intentionally ludicrous "penny dreadful", a madcap Gothic tale involving a werewolf, a vampire, a mummy, a prosthetic limb and several juicy murders . Until May 1

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? Horizon Stage, 1001 Calahoo Rd, Spruce Grove . By Edward Albee . Richard Winnick directs Barbara Courtney Weaver and Ian Johnston in Edward Albee's classic 1962 drama about the poisonously dysfunctional inst riage between a browbeaten history professor and he alcoholic wife . Apr. 27-30 (7:30pm) . \$15/\$5 (preview: Wed, Apr. 27)

THE WIZARD OF OZ Mayfield Dinner Theatre Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) * Unic June 26



theatre notes

BY PAUL MATWYCHUR

Mone in Along

naven't watched the Bravo! channel nages—not since they stopped showing reruns of Homicide: Life on the Street yer, weekday—but with the debut of the Singular Series, I'm definitely and to have to start tuning in again.

The Singular Series is a collection of not r-long one-person stage shows and debuts this Wednesday, May 4 at 6 on with—well, will you look at this!— imonton actor/playwright/director/all-round theatrical superstar Chris

Craddock's 2001 Fringe hit Moving Along. That's the quasi-autobiographical show he did while sitting in a specially designed "electric chair" whose arms contained switches and dimmers and that controlled an arrangement of lights in front of him and behind him. The play is also probably the best thing Craddock's ever written: a collection of short, very sharply written seriocomic routines in which Craddock talks about life, death, religion, family and the way humans need to live through painful experiences if they ever hope to learn anything. "No one appreciates damage," goes one of the key lines in the play. "At least, not at the time."

Like many of Craddock's plays, Moving Along requires Craddock to do switch emotions in a fraction of a second, and here, the electric chair set-up allows him to get the entire appearance of the stage to change too at the exact same moment, with unbelievable precision. You don't really get much of a sense of the full dramatic impact of this element of the show in the TV version,

but despite a very short shooting schedule, director Mark Campbell does a pretty good job of capturing Craddock's energetic performance and his effortless comic rapport with his audience. At 50 minutes, the show is about 15 minutes shorter than its original stage version, but the structure is so modular—one self-contained bit after another—that it never feels rushed or truncated. Miraculously, even the frequent commercial breaks don't disrupt Craddock's rhythm.

In Series, and my hat goes off to Halifax-based producers Mark Campbell, Pamela Pinch, Janice Evans and Greg Jones, who seem to have made a genuine effort to seek out a wide range of solo performers from across Canada. Fringe fans will recognize most of the show titles that make up the rest of the series: Shannan Calcutt's Burnt Tongue (May 11); Denise Clarke's So Low (May 18); Keir Cutler's Teaching Shakespeare (May 25); Alex Dallas's Drama Queen (June 1); Amy House's Bitter Rose (June 8); and James O'Reilly's Act of God (June 15). It's a great idea for a

TV series—and I can't help but feel a little envious that a producer in Edmonton, home of the Fringe, didn't think of it first.

Lost in the wilderness

Free Will Players artistic director John Kirkpatrick didn't try to pretend that he was delivering any earth-shattering news when he announced the lineup of this summer's River Clty Shake-speare Festival at the Hotel Macdonald on Monday. Everyone knows what to expect from the festival: quality outdoor productions of two Shakespearean plays featuring most of the city's leading actors and directors, and most of the people in the room knew which plays he'd chosen already.

This year, it's Romeo and Juliet and Love's Labour's Lost that'll be getting their moment in the hot Edmonton sun. Kirkpatrick himself will direct R&J, with Sheldon Elter and Kristi Hanson playing the star-crossed lovers; and Marianne Copithorne, who helmed last summer's excellent production of The Merchant of

Venice, will direct Chris Bullough, Daniela Vlaskalic and John Wright in LLL. The festival runs from June 21 to July 17 at Heritage Amphitheatre in Hawrelak Park.

Kirkpatrick also announced a couple of the company's other Shakespearean initiatives. Following the successful recent production at the Citadel of Shakespeare's Will, Vern Thiessen's extraordinary play about the life of Anne Hathaway (a script originally commissioned by the Free Will Players), the company has now commissioned RCSF alum Beth Graham to create a new play inspired by the Bard's life and work. "It's still pretty wide-open as to what it'll be," Graham says. "John and I have always had a great working relationship, but the finish line is still probably two or three years away."

Perhaps you can bet on how long it'll take Graham to write a first draft at **Verona in Vegas**, the company's fundraising casino, which takes place in the Shoctor lobby at the Citadel Theatre this Saturday. Tickets to the event are \$40, and are available from TIX on the Square. •

WENTS WEEKLY

That your free listings to 426-2889 or simal them to Glenys at them to Glenys at them to Glenys at the service weekly.com the service of the

CLUBS/LECTURES

86.86AL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 6328A-104 St;
1 6 30 8 30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St •
1 6 30 fbu (6 30pm)

THE FOX IN THE DUCK HOUSE: MANAGING
PEDATION IN PRAIRIES Rm 802, General Service

1 A Chinpus (492-5825) • Presentation by Or

1 Thu, Apr. 28 (3.30pm)

LEST EXPEDITIONS HOSTEL Hostel International,

1. 1454-6216, • Travel slide presentation of

HAY DAY MARCH Tipton Park, 108 St, 81 Ave • March

Parafron • Garneau United Place, 11148-84 Ave tried United United Place, 11148-84 Ave tried United United Place, 11148-84 Ave tried United United Place, 11148-84 Ave tried (Bpm) • City Arts tried to 1184 Ave. The Way of Life meditation: last Tue tried door) • Transmission Meditation, q Control 10350-124 St (433-3342) every

** STATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR ADULT CHILDREN

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*** Tree * Every This (until May 26) west-end **

*** This * pure 22) Northeast

** ** ** ** Semors Toastmasters meetings

1 73 Tre every month (1,30pm)

MASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION • Bonnie Doon

K Challe on it his Are (469 1949) Free guided hike,

Military (621 St. Jueron May 1 (9am) • Abbottsfield

Military (417 3252) Free guided hike, approx. 12

1. 11 Toyon Link May 8 (9am)

QUEERILISTINGS

 AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern 1Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

bwcoffeegroup@vahoo ca • Social group for bi-

bwcoffeegroup@yahoo ca • Sociał group for bi-curious and bi-sexual women • Second Thu ea month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavem with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open daily 9-3, Fri 8pm • Mon: Amateur strip (12:30); DJ Alvaro, Ashley Love • Tue: retro, top 40 with DJ Arrowchaser, malebox night, free pool • Wed: DJ Eddy Toonflash; Drag shows (12:30) • Thu: Wet undies contest (12:30) w/Connie Lingua and DJ Squiggles • Fri: Dance party with DJ Alvaro • Sat: DJ Arrowchaser, pool tournament • Sexy Sundays with DJ Eddy Toonflash, all request dance party

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbigay Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steambath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

FREE-TO-BE-VOLLEYBALL Oliver School Gym, SE Entrance, 10227-118 St (444-5673) • Mixed recreational volleyball league catering to the GLBT • Wed (7:30-9:30pm) (Sept-May) • \$3 (drop-in)/\$20 (term)/\$40 (year)

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOC) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related ilinesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

berta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kwells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie (mwonham@ualberta.ca) for schedule

Carneau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) •
Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB
www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational
and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners
encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices •
Every Tue and Thu

MEN TALKING WITH PRIDE (488-3234) . Every Sun

(7pm): A safe, supportive, confidential discussion group talking about all gay related issues, for men at any stage of coming out • Free • talkingwithpride@hotmail.com METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF

EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational

church services

PFLAG GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals transgenders

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Arnateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows. Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • Fri: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outtawak Downstairs. DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years: Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy Downstairs: New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Sun: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu ST (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steambaths open daily (24hrs)

TRANSSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egret@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed; Karaoke with Annie and Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun; Pool tournaments

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH 45, 9912-106 St • www.members shaw.ca/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • An adult facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and straight youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ARCHITECTS FESTIVAL • Architecture, Art and Urban Design - Celebrating the City • May 4-7 • All Saints' Anglican Cathedral: RAIC Gold Medal recipient, May 6 (4:30pm) • Winspear Centre: Featuring speaker Jeremy Harris, May 7 (9-10:30am) • Featuring architect Rob Wellington Quigley, May 7 (10:4512.15pm) • Featuring designer Ed Mazria, May 7 (1:453.15pm) • Competing Visions: featuring three architects presenting past work and designs, May 7 (3:30-5pm)

ASIAN INSPIRATION VARIETY SHOW Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (913-5480) • Celebrating Edmonton's Asian Heritage Month and Alberta's Centennial featuring music, dance, singing, tea sampling and an art display • Sat, May 7 (1pm) • Free

THE BEST OF THE INDIE MUSIC VIDEO FEST 2004
Black Dog Freehouse, 10425 82 Ave • Featuring indie
videos and live music • Thu, Apr. 28 (9:30pm) • Tickets
available at the door

CASTLIN HICKS Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (425-7993) • Live performance by playwright Caitlin Hicks followed by her film Singing the Bones • May 1 (6pm) • Free

CELEBRATION OF LABOUR Power Plant, U of A Campus (492-2026) • Featuring UnderCOVER (old/new rock, soul, reggae), Reviones (urban folk, pop, western roots), We Built This Province presentation by Eugene Plawiuk, Guy Smith and the Reviones • No minors • Wed, May 4 (7pm) • \$5 (adv)/\$3 (unwaged/student)/\$6 (door)

St. Albert (466-4310) • QUILT WALK: Presented by the St. Albert Quilters' Guild • Until May 1

SHOW Stanley Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (428-0805) • Featuring poetry, music, dance and more • Fri, May 6 (7pm) • \$5/\$7 (couple) • Tickets available LightHouse Mission, door

GREAT HUMAN RACE Butterdome, U of A Campus • 3km walk or 8km run, fundraiser for local non-profit organizations • Sat, May 7 • \$20 (walk registration)/\$25 (run registration) www.greathumanrace.com

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING Kids in the Hall Bistro, City Hall, Sir Winston Churchill Square *

Ceremony commemorating workers killed or injured on the job • Thu, Apr. 28 (7pm)

LABOUR CABARET Westmount Community League, 10978-127 St (708-6555) • Featuring the UK's Banner Theatre's new multi-media show Wild Geese, music by Meghan McMaster, the Praine Cats • Sat, Apr. 30 (7pm) • \$15 (adult)/\$10 (underemployed)

OUR VOICE FUNDRAISER Naked On Jasper, 10354 Jasper Ave (425-9730) • Music, auction • Apr. 30 (7pm)

PARTY IN YOUR JEANS Granite Club (468-7070) • Fundraiser for the Youth Emergency Shelter • \$75 • Apr. 29

SAIF WOMEN'S SHOW Salvation army Community
Centre, 165 Liberton Dr, St. Albert (460-2195) •
Fundraiser for the St. Albert Stop Abuse in Families
Society featuring fashion shows, entertainment, health
information and makeovers • May 7 • \$5 (adv)

SMALL ACT-BIG IMPACT City Arts Centre, 10943-84 Ave • National Fair Trade Weeks event featuring fair trade merchandise, presentations, music, art and film screenings • Fri, May 6 (noon-10pm) • Admission by donation/free (low income)

Fashlon show, silent auction, fundraiser for the Youth Emergency Shelter • Apr. 29 • \$25

STARS ON ICE Rexall Place (451-8000) • Thu, Apr. 28 • 7pm • \$85 00 (ice level)/\$65 (club seating)/\$50 (lower level)/\$35 (mid level) • Tickets available at TicketMaster

STREET PARTY/STREET JAM Gazebo Park, 83 Ave, 104 St • Sun, May 1 (after the May Day march, 12:30-1:00) • Featuring local hip hop acts, breakdancers, Polish dancers and more

TG PLM FESTIVAL AND SYMPOSIUM Unitarian Church, 10804-119 St • TransAwareness Week 2005 • May 2-7 • Free • TG Info Fair, May 2 (6pm) • Trans Awareness Film Fest, May 2-5 (7pm) • Book signing by Leslie Feinberg; May 6 (7pm) • Symposium on transphobia, trans-related violence and hate crimes; education and awareness-building strategies, May 7 (noon-Spm) • TRANScenDANCEl Closing party, social and dance; May 7 (9pm)

TROUBLEMAKERS: WORKING ALBERTANS, 19001950 Cosmopolitan Music Society, 8426 Gateway Blvd
(708-7555/439-8725) • Multimedia musical storytelling
event featuring Maria Dunn (singer/songwriter), Don
Bouzek (narration and visuals) • Sat, Apr. 30 (8pm) •
\$15/\$10 (underemployed)

UNION PROMENADE 99 St from the Library (102 Ave) to the Art Gallery (102 A Ave) • Dedication of the Union Promenade featuring the Notre Dame Des Bananes • Sat, Apr. 30 (1pm)

VERONA IN VEGAS Shoctor Lobby, Citadel, 9828-101A

Ave • Bring your ducats and come and gamble on the River

City Shakespeare Festival fundraiser • Sat, Apr. 30 (7pm) •

\$40 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

YOUTH EMERGENCY SHELTER SOCIETY Fox Pub, 10125
109 St (995-5438) • Fundraiser featuring bands, DJ, come
dy, jewellery sales, film shorts and photography • Thu, May
5 (12-2pm) • \$10 (adv)/\$12 (door)

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun

(9pm): with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri-Sat (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Keri

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Thu/Fri/Sat (9:30pm): with Escapade Entertuinment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-63 Ave (438-1148) * Every Sat (9:30pm)

BLIND PIG PUB 32 St. Anne St. St. Albert, 418-6332 • Every Thu: Ladies night and karaoke

SLUE QUILL 326 Saddleback Rd (434-3124) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

BORDERLINE PUB 3226-82 St (462-1888) • Every Thu-Sat (9:30pm)

BUD'S LOUNGE St. Albert (458-3826) • Every Fri-Sat (9 30pm-1:30am)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) .

Every Sun (8pm): Hosted by Jeannie

CEILI'S IRISH PUB 10338-109 St (426-5555) • |ameoke • Every Sat (9pm)

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

CLIFF CLAYVIN'S 9710-105 St (424-1614) * Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat

(9:30pm); with Stone Rock

DUSTER'S PUB 6402-118 Ave (474-5554) • Karaoke

FIRST CITY SPORTS LOUNGE 10136-100 St (428-3399) • Every Sun (10pm) with Mr. Entertainment

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu-Sat (9pm): with Debra-Fae

FUNKY BUDDHA 10341-B2 Ave (433 9676) • Every

Sun (9:30pm); with Scott

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed

HILLVIEW PUB 311 Woodvale Rd. W, Milwoods (462-0468) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30-1am)

JIMMY RAY'S 15211-111 Ave (486-3390) • Every fri/Sat (8.30pm); Name that tune

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed
KINGSKNIGHT PUB 9221-34 Ave (433-2599) • Greedy
Bastard Thursdays

KNIGHTS PUB SOUTH 1919-105 St (461-0587) • Every Sat (10pm-2am) • Gord's Best Live Singing Show

E.B.'S 23 Akins Dr. St. Aibert (460-9100) * Every Tue/Thu (9pm)

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St . Karaoke every Thu

MARK'S BACK PUB 13403 Fort Rd (406-5152) = Every Frl/Sat (9pm); with Peggy Sue MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) = Every Mon

with Scott

ORLANDO'S | 15163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Wed-Thu

(9pm-2am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

ORLANDO'S II 13509-127 St (451-7799) • Every

Tue/Wed (9pm)

OVERLAND RESTAURANT 12960 St. Albert Tr (454-0667)

• Every Fn/Sat (9pm): Off-Key Entertainment with Connie

(451-8022) • Every Thu

RATT U of A Campus (492-2048) • Karaoke Wednesdays
with Knegs from Stone Rock Productions

PEPPERS Westmount Centre, St. Albert Trail, 111 Ave.

RATTLESNAKE SALOON (438-8878) • Karaoke Corral Tue-Sat hosted by Mr. Entertainment ROSARIO'S PUB 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Daily (9pm)

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St (422-3499); Mon-Sat (9pm) Sun (7pm); with Ruth •

St (423-3499); Mon-Sat (9pm), Sun (7pm); with Ruth *
Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm)

• Old Strathcone, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211),
Thu/Fri/Sat (9:30pm-1.30am)

STRATHEARN PUB 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Wed/Fri (9pm)

r. B 'S PUB 62 St. Stony Plain Rd (443-2621) • Fn and Satikaraoke with Jeannie; games and pnzes (9pm-2am)

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Frisat (9pm-1am)
WHISTLE STOP PUB 24 Ave, 132 St (451-550a) 4

Wed/Thu karaoke with Jeannie; soon to have games and prizes

WINSTONS PUB 9016-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Wed/Fri/Sat (9 30-m-1am)

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: Karaoke with Annie and Tizzy (7pm-midnight)

YESTERDAY'S 205 Camegie Dr. St. Albert (459-0295) • Every Tue (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

ZOCCA'S PUB 10807 Castledowns Rd (473-6339) • Every Sun (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole



BY ROB BREZSNY



Mar 21 - Apr 18

A huge supply of frozen natural gas lies beneath the oceans. Researchers have just begun to develop the technology to mine it. " When they succeed, civilization will gain access to more energy than is available from all the world's oil reserves. This tantalizing prospect reminds me of your situation, Aries. You're sitting on a reserve of metaphorical fuel that could power your efforts for quite some time. Now all you have to do is figure out a way to get at it. (Thanks to Stephen Leahy of Wired News for the info on the frozen natural gas.)



Apr 20 - May 20

Even if you're not an artist, you're a creator. You're constantly hatching new plans, coming up with fresh ideas and shifting your approach to everything you do. It's to this part of you—the restless, inventive spirit that I address the following: it's a perfect time for you to cultivate increased respect and reverence for your creativity. Tap into the dormant potential of your amazing imagination. Feel confident about your ability to generate novelty. Realize how much power you have to change anything you

want to change. Here's your inspirational motto, courtesy of sculptor Constantin Brancusi: "Create like God, command like a king, work like a slave."



May 21 - June 20

A lot of antifreeze tastes sweet even though it's toxic. That's a big problem for dogs and children, who sometimes come upon spilled or open containers of antifreeze and drink it. New Mexico is one of the first places in the world to pass a law making it mandatory for antifreeze to be bitter-tasting, thus discouraging innocents from imbibing it. This should serve as a metaphor for you in the coming week, Gemini. Your inner child or inner pet may be drawn to ingesting experiences that are delectable but noxious. Have your inner adult take steps to ensure this won't happen.



June 21 - July 22

I won't protest if you resort to some outrageous showmanship to boost your cause, Cancerian. I won't judge you harshly if you try to walk the fine line between creative storytelling and over-the-top BS. Just make sure that you're always motivated more by fun and idealism than by self-aggrandizement. It's time to use all your tricks and call on all the favours you're owed as you sell your self without selling your soul.



10 23 Aug 22

You've been given a prophetic glimpse of the great victory that's possible. You're very close to neutralizing an old bugaboo and making sure that the past will no longer hold you back. Now comes the hardest part: will you be able to sustain your concentration until the triumphs are actually accom-

plished? Or will you be fulled into fazy complacency by the sense of security that your partial breakthroughs have provided? Personally, I believe you will summon the dogged ingenuity necessary to finish the job; you will turn almost into completely.

Aug 23 - Supt 22

If I were going to write a fairytale about the current state of your life, I would say that your stolen treasure is locked away in a heart-shaped metal box at the top of a glass mountain. You have every right to steal it back, but you haven't been able to get to it. The surface of the mountain is too slippery for you to climb. In the next chapter of the fairytale, you will encounter an elf or dwarf or witch who has a pair of special shoes with suction cups that could allow you to scale the peak. But you will have to give something in return for those shoes. And here's the tricky part: The elf or dwarf or witch may not tell you exactly what he or she wants; you might have to guess.

LIBRA

Sapt 28 - Oct 22

Polls reveal that many Germans wish they could return to the days when the Berlin Wall was intact. They complain that dismantling the barriers between the eastern and western portions of the country has led to economic turmoil in both areas. I mention this, Libra, because I think it resembles a feeling you're currently harbouring. A part of you is longing for the bad old days when a now-defunct obstacle was a fixture in your life. You're romanticizing the protection that the obstacle offered and forgetting how oppressive and limiting it was. It's okay to entertain the fantasy of restoring the wall in fact, I recommend that you do—but don't you dare actually restore it.

> 100% leather sofa, loveseat, and chair never used. Cost \$4,200. \$1,795. Free delivery. Can deliver 453-3755.

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Oct 28 - Nov 21

For a limited time only, everything will be pretty much the reverse of what it usually is. Do you have an unlucky number? In the coming week, that number will be a sign that good fortune is nearby. Do you have qualities that you regard as weak or undeveloped? You can now make them work to your advantage. What are the things you're afraid of? Deal frankly with them and you will stimulate a big boost in your courage. Are you weary of worrying about your enemies? They are about to become great teachers, maybe even helpers.

You're entering into the thick of the problemsolving phase of your astrological cycle, Sagittarius. Your dilemmas are probably heating up, becoming more frustrating and time-consuming. What's more important to know, however, is that you now have a heightened power to fix those dilemmas. In fact, I predict that soon after reading this horoscope, you'll find you have access to unprecedented levels of wild but disciplined determination. As you go about your work, keep in mind Buckminster Fuller's standard for measuring his effectiveness: "When I am working on a problem," he said, "I never think about beauty. I think only of how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong."

Dec 22 - Jan 18

You may have trophies, merit badges and plaques to commemorate your sexual accomplishments, Capricom. You may have a Ph.D. in tantra and letters from past lovers testifying to your excellence as an erotic partner. Nevertheless, I believe you have more to learn. There are frontiers you have not yet explored. And this is

the perfect time for you to push to the next level. Open your mind and heart to the post a ity that you're ready to upgrade the way rou stir up emotion-enriching, soul-expanding biss

I was looking for a house to rent. A real estate manager gave me a tour of various houses that were available. At one place the occupants weren't home, but the manager had the key to the door and permission to enter. As she led me around, we came upon the master bedroom, A huge German shepherd was on the bed, I reflexively withdrew, afraid the dog would attack the strangers in its house. But it didn't bark, pounce or even growl. On the contrary, it shivered with fear. Its protective instincts seemed paralyzed. I think the dog's behaviour is an apt metaphor for the current state of your own inner guardian, Aquarius—you know, the fierce part of your psyche that defends your interests. It's unnaturally timid and hesitant, and is thus not primed to do its job properly. Do whatever it takes to cure it of its malaise.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Jan 20 - Feb 187

After rejecting proposals from many direct tors, Bob Dylan has finally authorized Oscarnominated Todd Haynes to make a film about his life. Seven different actors will pertray Dylan, including a black woman. "I am setting out to explode the idea that anybody can be depicted in a single self," Haynes told the Sunday Times. You already explode that idea every week of your life, Pisces, and you will be exploding it with even greater force and style in the coming days. I encourage you to be proud of your own riotous mu plicity. It's something to be celebrated, not to be shy about. Why not fantasize about the seven actors and actresses you'd choose to play you in the movie about your life? @

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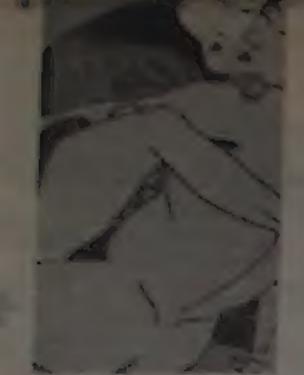
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sex

Just-plain-queer theory

Dear Andrea,

I'm a tranny-boy and have always been attracted to femmes but am recently finding myself very attracted to other boys. My longtime girlfriend (crazy supportive of my trans ID) has always joked that once I started testosterone I'd become a tranny-fag... and now I have. I love her and cannot imagine my life without her but I feel like I should explore sex/relationships with boys. We are not poly. What should I do?

Love, T-Boy

Dear Boy: It's the damnedest thing, and if I hadn't seen it again and again I would have imagined it to be the product of some queer-theory geek's wishful imagination, but... besides the obvious sexual orientation categories of men attracted to women, men attracted to men, women attracted to women, women attracted to men, and men or women attracted to both men and women (Phew! Did I get them all?), there appears to be another category: "just plain queer." I think I first witnessed this phenomenon among transwomen who started out as (nominal) men attracted only to men and are now lesbians, but it really seems to be a thing among transguys, as your girlfriend noted when she jokingly predicted your future. The first time I met a tranny guy who'd started out exclusively lesbian and was now a gay man, I thought, "Wow, what a super-weird thing! Who'd have guessed this would happen?" The second time, I thought, "Whoa! Again?" But by the third time, it was more like, "Okay. This is a thing. I wonder what we should call it?"

I've seen "just plain queer" sexuality manifested in other ways as well, notably among the polymorphously perverted sex-party crowd, where it's not uncommon to see dyed-in-thewool exclusive lesbians and gay men having sex with each other and insisting (not that I particularly disagree with them) that sex among queers is queer sex, period, nothing hetero about it. Then again, I live in San Francisco.

But back to the lesbians-whobecome-gay-men phenomenon. I think part of it comes from a deeply internalized and hard-won queer identity, where the new man had fought so hard for self-acceptance and has forged such a strong and satisfying sense of community and belonging that he simply could never be comfort-

by forbidding yourself to explore at least some tiny corner of this whole huge new world will eventually backfire on you. If you end up so frustrated that you find yourself stomping out and blaming your girlfriend for trying to hold you back, nobody wins. And if you're ever going to take the risk, it should probably be now, while you're young and relatively unattached (i.e., girlfriend but no wife or kids). At least explore the possibility—otherwise, you'll never know.

Then again, your situation is not much different from that of any bisexual person in a monogamous relationship and, contrary to popular belief, there are many out there. Nothing pisses a bibut-monogamous person off quicker than the assumption that they must be

You are bi-while-drunk, which, if it isn't currently considered a sexual orientation of its own, certainly ought to be

able turning his back on Queer World and strutting around passing for straight with a girl on his arm. So instead, he stays queer by developing an interest in gay men. At the same time, experience has taught us that wanting a certain identity is not at all the same thing as having it, so I doubt that any of these guys has changed camps from lesbian to gay man by. sheer force of will. There is something else going on here, something deeper, less conscious and nowhere near as politically correct.

Of course, all of this is very interesting but it does not directly address your problem, namely, how to let your inner gay-boy out to play without jeopardizing your relationship. There is, alas, no easy solution, although when you declare, "We are not poly," I have to wonder, are you absoposilutely sure? Is it completely out of the question? Have you read the literature, talked to poly folks, had some long and careful discussions about whether you could find space in your life for a little something (flirtation, anonymous grope, threesome, fling) without rocking the boat or, rather, capsizing it? I fear that protecting your relationship

cheating, or headed toward cheating, or at any rate deeply resentful over not getting to cheat. It is absolutely possible for someone attracted to both men and women to forswear one entire gender in order to forge an exclusive bond with one person. People do it all the time. That doesn't mean they won't sound a bit wistful on occasion if you ask them, "But don't you miss having sex with [fill in the blank]s?"

Love, Andrea

Bi me a drink

Dear Andrea:

I sometimes flirt with women when I'm very drunk. My husband thinks I'm bisexual. I don't feel attracted to women when sober. What's going on?

Love, Flirty

Dear Flirt:

Easy. You are bi-while-drunk, which, if it isn't currently considered a sexual orientation of its own, certainly ought to be.

Love, Andrea 0

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.





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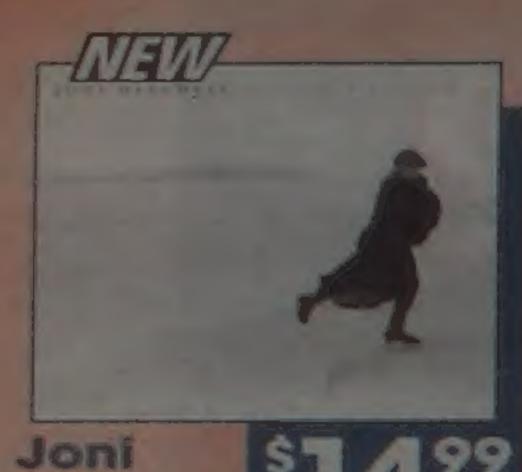
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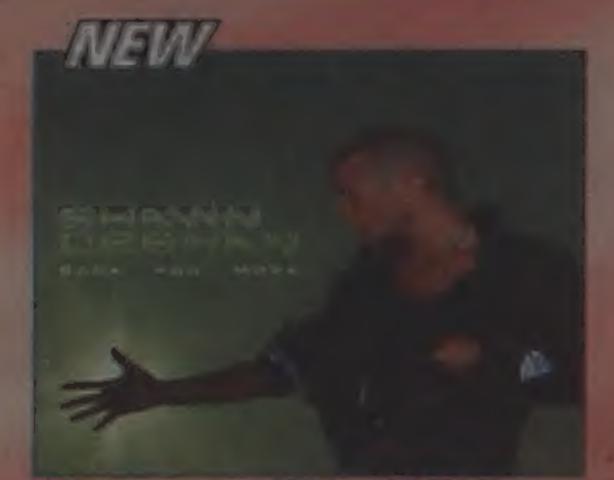
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